"BRIGHT IS THE RING OF WORDS WHEN THE RIGHT MAN RINGS THEM"

THE RING OF WORDS

ARRANGED IN THREE BOOKS FOR USE IN SCHOOLS

by

REED MOORHOUSE

FIRST BOOK

J·M·DENT·AND·SONS·LIMITED

THE RING OF WORDS

BOOK ONE

"Glory, God! for loss and gain,
For the pleasure and the pain."

THE

RING OF WORDS

A BOOK OF VERSE

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BOOK ONE

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

"Bright is the ring of words
When the right man rings them"

MESTON TRAINING COLLEGE
MADRAS-14

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PREFACE

THE best anthologies of verse for children are those which are read by them with most delight. To give pleasure is their essential function; the amount given is the measure of success. However excellent their contents from the æsthetic standpoint of an adult, if they fail to please the child they are practically worthless to those of us whose work lies in helping in the development of the young life.

It is desirable, of course, that the verse chosen should be of a high standard, but its main purpose must be to awaken interest and create desire.

In the present volume such poetry has been selected as my experience in the teaching of English has proved best for this purpose: verse where fancy roams in story-guise to places and things of perennial interest to girls and boys; poems in which the word-painting is done with broad and rich colouring, and the moods of their authors are understandable and expressed simply and sweetly.

With the birth of interest comes the teacher's opportunity. Now the right environment must be provided, for, without this, growth is impossible. The children must receive every encouragement to find poems for themselves, in school and out of it; to be their own critics of values, and make collections of whatsoever they think is worthy; to prepare these little anthologies of their own in an artistic way, setting down the poetry as beautifully as possible, and adding pictures which seem related to certain verses or extracts; to acquire the habit also of connecting poems with the natural objects which were their inspiration: and above all, to learn, and say pleasingly to their fellow-scholars, the pieces they have discovered; to meet criticism, and, in turn, criticise the efforts of others. And here the teacher will be one with his children, to speak the poem he has found, to show the reason why he likes this, and why he does not care for that.

For so comes—Taste.

R. M.

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The editor, having failed to get in touch with Mr. John Halsham, has ventured to include the poems " The Moon " and " Baby's Song " without permission. The keen desire to include these verses for the children will, we hope, be considered sufficient excuse for the liberty taken.

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THE RING OF WORDS

THE TREASURE

Rich is the earth with a treasure,
  Most wonderful, boundless and free;
Full is the world, beyond measure,
  Of beauty for you and me.
Gold of the sun heaven adorning;
  Little grey shadows that pass;
Pearl of the dew in the morning,
  A-sheen on the flowers and grass.

Wealthy the world, beyond counting,
  With hoard of a music sweet:
Trill of the lark in its mounting,
  And whisper of waving wheat;
Chant of the bee homeward flying;
  Prayer of the leaf on the tree;
Song of the wind softly sighing,
  And dirge of the restless sea.

Sheila Moore.

HAY HARVEST

I MET a man mowing
  A meadow of hay;
So smoothly and flowing
  His swathes fell away,
    At break of the day
    Up Hambleden way;
A yellow-eyed collie
  Was guarding his coat—
Loose-limbed and lob-lolly,
  But wise and remote.

The morning came leaping,
  'Twas four o' the clock,
The world was still sleeping
  At Hambleden Lock—
    As sound as a rock
    Slept village and Lock;
" Fine morning! " the man says,
  And I says, " Fine day! "
Then I to my fancies
  And he to his hay!

And lovely and quiet,
  And lonely and chill,
Lay river and eyot,
  And meadow and mill—
    I think of them still—
    Mead, river and mill;
For wasn't it jolly
  With only us three—
The yellow-eyed collie,
  The mower and me?

PATRICK R. CHALMERS.

SISTER, AWAKE!

Sister, awake! close not your eyes!
  The day her light discloses,
And the bright morning doth arise
  Out of her bed of roses.

See the clear sun, the world's bright eye,
  In at our window peeping:
Lo, how he blusheth to espy
  Us idle wenches sleeping!

Therefore awake! make haste, I say,
  And let us, without staying,
All in our gowns of green so gay
  Into the Park a-maying!

Anonymous. (From Thomas Bateson's *First Set of English Madrigals*, 1604.)

THE ELFIN PEDLAR

Lady and gentlemen fays, come buy!
No pedlar has such a rich packet as I.

Who wants a gown
  Of purple fold,
Embroidered down
  The seams with gold?
    See here!—a Tulip richly laced
    To please a royal fairy's taste!

Who wants a cap
  Of crimson grand?
By great good hap
  I've one on hand;
    Look, sir!—a Cockscomb, flowering red,
    'Tis just the thing, sir, for your head!

Who wants a frock
  Of vestal hue?
Or snowy smock?—
  Fair maid, do you?
    O me!—a Ladysmock so white!
    Your bosom's self is not more bright!

Who wants to sport
  A slender limb?
I've every sort
  Of hose for him:
    Both scarlet, striped, and yellow ones,
    This Woodbine makes such pantaloons.

Who wants—(hush! hush!)
  A box of paint?
'Twill give a blush
  Yet leave no taint:
    This Rose with natural rouge is fill'd,
    From its own dewy leaves distill'd.

Then, lady and gentlemen fays, come buy!
You never will meet such a merchant as I!

GEORGE DARLEY.

THE NECKAN

In summer on the headlands,
  The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
  And sings his plaintive song.

Green rolls beneath the headlands,
  Green rolls the Baltic Sea;
And there below the Neckan's feet,
  His wife and children be.

He sings not of the ocean,
  Its shells and roses pale;
Of earth, of earth the Neckan sings,
  He hath no other tale.

He sits upon the headlands,
  And sings a mournful stave
Of all he saw and felt on earth
  Far from the kind sea-wave.

Sings how, a knight, he wandered
  By castle, field and town—
But earthly knights have harder hearts
  Than the sea-children own.

Sings of his earthly bridal—
  Priest, knights, and ladies gay.
  And who art thou," the priest began,
  " Sir Knight, who wedd'st to-day? "—

" I am no knight," he answered;
  " From the sea-waves I come."—
The knights drew sword, the ladies screamed,
  The surpliced priest stood dumb.

He sings how from the chapel
He vanished with his bride,
And bore her down to the sea-halls,
Beneath the salt sea-tide.

He sings how she sits weeping
'Mid shells that round her lie.
" False Neckan shares my bed," she weeps;
"No Christian mate have I."—

He sings how through the billows
He rose to earth again,
And sought a priest to sign the cross,
That Neckan Heaven might gain.

He sings how, on an evening,
Beneath the birch-trees cool,
He sat and played his harp of gold,
Beside the river-pool.

Beside the pool sat Neckan—
Tears filled his mild blue eye
On his white mule, across the bridge,
A cassocked priest rode by.

"Why sitt'st thou there, O Neckan,
And play'st thy harp of gold?
Sooner shall this my staff bear leaves,
Than thou shalt Heaven behold."

But, lo, the staff it budded!
It greened, it branched, it waved.
" O ruth of God," the priest cried out,
" This lost sea-creature saved! "

The cassocked priest rode onwards,
  And vanished with his mule;
But Neckan in the twilight grey
  Wept by the river-pool.

He wept: "The earth hath kindness,
  The sea, the starry poles;
Earth, sea and sky, and God above—
  But, ah, not human souls!"

In summer, on the headlands,
  The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
  And sings this plaintive song.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE TWELFE OXEN

I have twelfe oxen, that be faire and brown,
And they go a grasing down by the town.
  With hey! with how! with hey!
Saweste not you mine oxen, you litill prety boy?

I have twelfe oxen, and they be faire and white,
And they go a grasing down by the dyke.
  With hey! with how! with hey!
Saweste not you mine oxen, you litill prety boy?

I have twelfe oxen, and they be faire and blak,
And they go a grasing down by the lak.
  With hey! with how! with hey!
Saweste not you mine oxen, you litill prety boy?

I have twelfe oxen, and they be faire and rede,
And they go a grasing down by the mede.
  With hey! with how! with hey!
Saweste not you mine oxen, you litill prety boy?

Anonymous.

THE GREEN LADY

WILD fawn, wild fawn,
Hast seen the Green Lady?
The merles are singing,
The ferns are springing,
The little leaves whisper from dusk to dawn—
Green Lady! Green Lady!
The little leaves whisper from dusk to dawn—
Wild fawn, wild fawn!

Wild fawn, wild fawn,
Hast seen the Green Lady?
The bird in the nest,
And the child at the breast,
They open wide eyes as she comes down the dawn—
The bonnie Green Lady!
Bird and child make a whisper of music at dawn,
Wild fawn, wild fawn!

Wild fawn, wild fawn,
Dost thou flee the Green Lady?
Her wild flowers will race thee,
Her sunbeams will chase thee,
Her laughter is ringing aloud in the dawn—
O the Green Lady!
With yellow flowers strewing the ways of the dawn.
Wild fawn, wild fawn!

WILLIAM SHARP.

SPRING

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring! the sweet Spring!

Thomas Nash.

SPRING GOETH ALL IN WHITE

Spring goeth all in white,
Crowned with milk-white may:
In fleecy flocks of light,
O'er heaven the white clouds stray:

White butterflies in the air;
White daisies prank the ground:
The cherry and hoary pear
Scatter their snow around.

Robert Bridges.

SEGWUN AND PEBOAN

In his lodge beside a river,
Close beside a frozen river,
Sat an old man, sad and lonely,
Hearing nothing but the tempest
As it roared along the forest,
Seeing nothing but the snow-storm
As it whirled and hissed and drifted.
All the coals were white with ashes,
And the fire was slowly dying,
As a young man, walking lightly,
At the open doorway entered.
Red with blood of youth his cheeks were,
Soft his eyes as stars in Spring-time;
Bound his forehead was with grasses,
Bound and plumed with scented grasses;
On his lips a smile of beauty,
Filling all the lodge with sunshine;
In his hands a bunch of blossoms,
Filling all the lodge with sweetness.
" Ah, my son! " exclaimed the old man,
" Happy are my eyes to see you,
Tell me of your strange adventures,
Of the lands where you have travelled;
I will tell you of my prowess,
Of my many deeds of wonder.
When I blow my breath about me,
When I breathe upon the landscape,
Motionless are all the rivers,
Hard as stone becomes the water! "
And the young man answered, smiling:
" When I blow my breath about me,
When I breathe upon the landscape,

Flowers spring up o'er all the meadows,
Singing, onward rush the rivers!"
"When I shake my hoary tresses,"
Said the old man, darkly frowning,
"All the land with snow is covered;
All the leaves from all the branches
Fall and fade and die and wither.
From the waters and the marshes
Rise the wild-goose and the heron,
Fly away to distant regions.
And where'er my footsteps wander,
All the wild beasts of the forest
Hide themselves in holes and caverns,
And the earth becomes as flintstone!"
"When I shake my flowing ringlets,"
Said the young man, softly laughing,
"Showers of rain fall warm and welcome,
Plants lift up their heads rejoicing,
Back unto their lakes and marshes
Come the wild-goose and the heron,
Homeward shoots the arrowy swallow,
Sing the blue-bird and the robin;
And where'er my footsteps wander,
All the meadows wave with blossoms,
All the woodlands ring with music,
All the trees are dark with foliage!"
While they spake, the night departed;
From the distant realms of Wabun,
From his shining lodge of silver,
Like a warrior robed and painted,
Came the sun, and said, "Behold me!"
Then the old man's tongue was speechless,
And the air grew warm and pleasant,
And upon the wigwam sweetly
Sang the blue-bird and the robin,

And the stream began to murmur,
And a scent of growing grasses
Through the lodge was gently wafted.
  And Segwun, the youthful stranger,
More distinctly in the daylight
Saw the icy face before him;
It was Peboan, the Winter!
  From his eyes the tears were flowing,
As from melting lakes the streamlets,
And his body shrunk and dwindled
As the shouting sun ascended,
Till into the air it faded,
Till into the ground it vanished.
  Thus it was that in the Northland,
After that unheard-of coldness,
That intolerable Winter,
Came the Spring with all its splendour,
All its birds and all its blossoms,
All its flowers and leaves and grasses.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

THE MONK OF HILDESHEIM

(The Monk had read in his holy writings that a thousand years in the sight of God are but as a day, and this he found difficult to believe.)

FROM cloister grey, one summer day,
The Monk of Hildesheim strolled out,
In forest fair to breathe a prayer,
And cleanse his soul of doubt.

A thousand years to God appears
But even as the shortest day,"
He could not see how this might be,
And, musing, went his way.

Each forest glade was bright arrayed
In grass, and flower, and waving fern;
While overhead, with blushes red,
The sinking sun did burn.

A birdie trilled, and quickly filled
The woodland all with melody;
'Twas like a song of angel-throng
Praising their God on high.

He listened much amazed that such
A music came from throat of bird;
And shadows fell, but 'neath the spell
The Monk not even stirred.

The flowers slept; the blue stars crept
Over the desert sky of night:
He lingered on when these were gone
And day brought its delight.

Still sang the bird: the Monk still heard
With ravished heart that magic song:
Though night and day oft passed away,
He stood the flowers among.

The moments flew; he never knew
That years of joy but moments seemed:
But moons did wane and wax again
While the glad music streamed.

And when the autumn came and brought
Its sombre tints to trees and flowers,
And touched the land with burning hand,
Unthought of fled the hours.

The moons did wane and wax again;
The gold sun daily rose and set;
The seasons passed: until at last
The Monk quite old did get.

He made his way one close of day
Towards his cloister cold and dim.
The door was locked; he meekly knocked,
But no friend welcomed him.

For passed away from cloister grey,
From golden sun, and shadow too,
His friends had gone: and now upon
Their graves the grasses grew.

HAROLD HALMYR.

IN THE POPPY FIELD

MAD Patsy said, he said to me,
That every morning he could see
An angel walking on the sky;
Across the sunny skies of morn
He threw great handfuls far and nigh
Of poppy seed among the corn;
And then, he said, the angels run
To see the poppies in the sun.

A poppy is a devil weed,
I said to him—he disagreed:
He said the devil had no hand
In spreading flowers tall and fair

Through corn and rye and meadow land,
By garth and barrow everywhere:
The devil has not any flower,
But only money in his power.

And then he stretched out in the sun
And rolled upon his back for fun:
He kicked his legs and roared for joy
Because the sun was shining down,
He said he was a little boy
And would not work for any clown:
He ran and laughed behind a bee,
And danced for very ecstasy.

James Stephens.

THE MAD MAID'S SONG

Good-morrow to the day so fair;
  Good-morning, sir, to you;
Good-morrow to mine own torn hair,
  Bedabbled with the dew.

Good-morning to this primrose too;
  Good-morrow to each maid;
That will with flowers the tomb bestrew
  Wherein my Love is laid.

Ah! woe is me; woe, woe is me;
  Alack and well-a-day!
For pity, sir, find out that bee,
  Which bore my Love away.

I'll seek him in your bonnet brave;
  I'll seek him in your eyes;
Nay, now I think they've made his grave
  I' th' bed of strawberries.

I'll seek him there; I know, ere this,
The cold, cold earth doth shake him;
But I will go, or send a kiss
By you, sir, to awake him.

Pray hurt him not; though he be dead,
He knows well who do love him:
And who with green turfs rear his head,
And who do rudely move him.

He's soft and tender, pray take heed;
With bands of cowslips bind him,
And bring him home;—but 'tis decreed
That I shall never find him.

ROBERT HERRICK.

BIRDS

SURE maybe ye've heard the storm-thrush
Whistlin' bould in March,
Before there's a primrose peepin' out,
Or a wee red cone on the larch;
Whistlin' the sun to come out o' the cloud,
An' the wind to come over the sea,
But for all he can whistle so clear an' loud,
He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've seen the song-thrush
After an April rain
Slip from in-undher the drippin' leaves,
Wishful to sing again;
An' low wi' love when he's near the nest,
An' loud from the top o' the tree,
But for all he can flutter the heart in your breast,
He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've heard the cushadoo
  Callin' his mate in May,
When one sweet thought is the whole of his life,
  An' he tells it the one sweet way.
But my heart is sore at the cushadoo
  Filled wid his own soft glee,
Over an' over his " me an' you! "
  He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've heard the red-breast
  Singin' his lone on a thorn,
Mindin' himself o' the dear days lost,
  Brave wid his heart forlorn.
The time is in dark November,
  An' no spring hopes has he:
" Remember," he sings, " remember! "
  Ay, *thon's* the wee bird for me.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

ROBIN REDBREAST

WHEN people placed a thorny Crown
Upon the Head of Christ the King,
There flew a little birdie down
And greatly was it sorrowing.

It rested on the bleeding Head
Of One Who cared for great and small,
Who loved e'en valley lilies red,
The babies and the birdies all.

It gazed upon the crowd forlorn
That did such foolish hatred wreak,
And tried to break one cruel thorn
With its small loving tender beak.

The pain of our fair Christ to ease
Thus bravely did the bird its best;
And only sought its Lord to please,
Though dripped the blood a-down its breast.

And this is why all Robins tread
In fancy waistcoats gaily drest:
Because one Robin once did shed
Red blood for Christ upon its breast.

From *The Ivory Gate.*

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
" Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers
Chee, chee, chee! "

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.
Hear him call in his merry note:
" Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look what a nice new coat of mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee! "

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
  Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
  Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
    " Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers, while I am here.
    Chee, chee, chee! "

Modest and shy as a nun is she,
  One weak chirp is her only note;
Braggart, and prince of braggarts, is he,
  Pouring boasts from his little throat:
    " Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
    Chee, chee, chee! "

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
  Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
  Robert is singing with all his might:
    " Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
    Chee, chee, chee! "

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THE BLIND WORM AND THE NIGHTINGALE

THE Blind Worm had an eye, I've heard;
The Nightingale another;
Pray listen how the naughty Bird
Abused the Worm his brother.

(For Worms and Birds and Girls and Boys,
The Madams and the Misters,
And Flow'rs and Trees that give us joys,
All brothers are,—or sisters.

Perhaps you don't agree with me:
Well, if you don't, no matter:
The world will still turn round, you see;
And little pigs get fatter.)

The Fairies asked the Nightingale
If he'd attend their Party;
He winked his eye, and cocked his tail
In manner gay and hearty.

Now all the Fairies had two eyes;
The Nightingale but one, Sir:
His thinking-cap he donned, and wise
He looked when they had gone, Sir.

He cried: " 'Twill beggarly appear
To be so out of fashion:
They with two eyes—I one—oh, dear!
It puts me in a passion!"

He sought the wriggling Worm, and said:
" Dear brother mine, good-morrow!
To-night I with the Fairies tread
And wish your eye to borrow!"

(I beg that you will notice, Sir,
This Bird-and-Worm relation:
As I have said, they brothers were,
Before in this narration.

And little folks from near and far,
And big ones too, and others,
Both rich and poor, but sisters are
—Unless, of course, they're brothers.)

Good-natured Worm! he lent his eye,
And blindly there he stood, Sir.
I praise that Worm, and wish that I
Were only just as good, Sir.

But never came the Nightingale
To give the Worm his eye back:
He came, 'tis true, but turned his tail
And scornfully did fly back.

" Two eyes to me. No eyes to thee!"
He cried when he came peeping.
" Well," said the Worm, " I'll get it, see,
Some time when you are sleeping."

MESTON TRAINING COLLEGE
MADRAS-14

And from that day the Nightingale
Has never had much sleep, Sir:
And night and day his songs ne'er fail,
Lest near the Worm should creep, Sir.

No! never sleeps; but nods and nods,
And forty winks keeps taking;
When dew is falling on the sods,
And when the flow'rs are waking.

He sings of this; he sings of that;
No singer e'er was finer;
In natural, or sharp, or flat,
In major or in minor.

(Perhaps you don't agree with me;
And if you don't, no matter:
The Moon won't tumble in the Sea,
Or Rain-drops cease to patter.)

REED MOORHOUSE.

THE BLACKBIRD'S SONG

MAGDALEN at Michael's gate
  Tirled at the pin;
On Joseph's thorn sang the blackbird,
  " Let her in! Let her in! "

" Hast thou seen the wounds? " said Michael,
  " Knowest thou thy sin? "
" It is evening, evening," sang the blackbird,
  " Let her in! Let her in! "

" Yes, I have seen the wounds,
  And I know my sin."
" She knows it well, well, well," sang the blackbird,
  " Let her in! Let her in! "

" Thou bringest no offerings," said Michael.
  " Nought save sin."
And the blackbird sang, " She is sorry, sorry, sorry.
  Let her in! Let her in! "

When he had sung himself to sleep,
  And night did begin,
One came and opened Michael's gate,
  And Magdalen went in.

HENRY KINGSLEY.

THE DOVE'S ANSWER

ONE morning, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they would cease;
'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, " Hear the story, hear the story! "
And the lark sang, " Give us glory! "
And the dove said, " Give us peace! "

Then I hearkened, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my dear, the dove;
When the nightingale came after, " Give us fame to sweeten duty! "
When the wren sang, " Give us beauty! "
She made answer, " Give us love! "

JEAN INGELOW. (?)

SAGE COUNSEL

THE lion is the beast to fight:
He leaps along the plain,
And if you run with all your might,
He runs with all his mane.
I'm glad I'm not a Hottentot,
But if I were, with outward cal-lum
I'd either faint upon the spot,
Or hie me up a leafy pal-lum.

The chamois is the beast to hunt:
He's fleeter than the wind,
And when the chamois is in front
The hunter is behind.
The Tyrolese make famous cheese
And hunt the chamois o'er the chazzums;
I'd choose the former, if you please,
For precipices give me spaz-zums.

The polar bear will make a rug
Almost as white as snow:
But if he gets you in his hug,
He rarely lets you go.
And Polar ice looks very nice,
With all the colours of a prissum:
But, if you'll follow my advice,
Stay home and learn your catechissum.

ARTHUR T. QUILLER-COUCH.

THE FAIRY SHOEMAKER

LITTLE Cowboy, what have you heard,
Up on the lonely rath's green mound?
Only the plaintive yellow bird
Sighing in sultry fields around,
Chary, chary, chary, chee-ee!
Only the grasshopper and the bee?—
"Tip-tap, rip-rap,
Tick-a-tack too!
Scarlet leather, sewn together,
This will make a shoe.
Left, right, pull it tight;
Summer days are warm;
Underground in winter,
Laughing at the storm!"

Lay your ear close to the hill.
Do you not catch the tiny clamour—
Busy click of an elfin hammer,
Voice of the Lepracaun singing shrill
As he merrily plies his trade?
He's a span
And a quarter in height.
Get him in sight, hold him tight,
And you're a made
Man!

You watch your cattle the summer day,
Sup on potatoes, sleep in the hay;
How would you like to roll in your carriage,
Look for a duchess's daughter in marriage?
Seize the Shoemaker—then you may!
" Big boots a-hunting
Sandals in the hall,
White for a wedding-feast,
Pink for a ball.
This way, that way
So we make a shoe;
Getting rich every stitch,
Tick-tack-too! "
Nine-and-ninety treasure-crocks
This keen miser-fairy hath,
Hid in mountains, woods, and rocks,
Ruin and round-tow'r, cave and rath,
And where the cormorants build;
From times of old
Guarded by him;
Each of them fill'd
Full to the brim
With gold!

I caught him at work one day, myself,
In the castle-ditch where foxglove grows,—
A wrinkled, wizen'd, and bearded elf,
Spectacles stuck on his pointed nose,
Silver buckles to his hose,
Leather apron—shoe in his lap—
" Rip-rap, tip-tap,
Tack-tack-too!
(A grasshopper on my cap!
Away the moth flew!)
Buskins for a fairy prince,
Brogues for his son,—
Pay me well, pay me well
When the job is done! "
The rogue was mine, beyond a doubt.
I stared at him; he stared at me;
" Servant, Sir! " " Humph! " says he,
And pull'd a snuff-box out.
He took a long pinch, look'd better pleased,
The queer little Lepracaun;
Offer'd the box with a whimsical grace,—
Pouf! he flung the dust in my face,
And, while I sneezed,
Was gone!

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

THE WEE WEE MAN

As I was walking mine alane
  Atween a water and a wa',
There I espied a wee wee man,
  And he was the least that e'er I saw.

His legs were scant a shathmont's length,
  And thick and thimber was his thie;
Atween his brows there was a span,
  And atween his shoulders there was three.

He's ta'en and flung a meikle stane,
  And he flang 't as far as I could see;
Though I had been a Wallace wight
  I couldna liften 't to my knee.

" O wee wee man, but ye be strang!
  O tell me where your dwelling be? "—
" My dwelling's down by yon bonny bower;
  Fair lady, come wi' me and see."

On we lap and awa' we rade,
  Till we came to yon bonny green;
We lighted down to bait our steed,
  And out there came a lady sheen;

Wi' four and twenty at her back
  A' comely clad in glisterin' green:
Tho' the King of Scotland had been there,
  The warst o' them might ha' been his queen.

On we lap, and awa' we rade,
  Till we came to a bonny ha';
The roof was o' the beaten gowd,
  And the floor was o' the cristal a'.

When we came to the stair-foot,
  Ladies were dancing jimp and sma',
But in the twinkling of an eie
  My wee wee man was clean awa'.

Out gat the lights, on came the mist,
  Ladies nor mannie mair cou'd I see:
I turned about, and gae a look
  Just at the foot o' Benachie.

Old Ballad.

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS

I WROTE some lines upon a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought as usual men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I should die;
Albeit in a general way
A sober man am I.

I called my servant and he came—
(How kind it was of him
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb).

He took the paper and I watched
And saw him peep therein;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next,—the grin grew broad
And shot from ear to ear:
He read the third,—a cackling sound
I now began to hear:

The fourth—he burst into a roar;
The fifth—his waistband split;
The sixth—he burst five buttons off
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights with sleepless care
I watched that wretched man,
And since I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

OLIVER W. HOLMES.

MY BEAUTIFUL LADY

I LOVE my Lady; she is very fair;
Her brow is wan, and bound by simple hair;
Her spirit sits aloof, and high,
But glances from her tender eye
In sweetness droopingly.

My Lady walks as I have seen a swan
Swim where a glory on the water shone:
There ends of willow branches ride,
Quivering in the flowing tide,
By the deep river's side.

How beautiful she is! A glorious gem,
She shines above the summer diadem
Of flowers! And when her light is seen
Among them, all in reverence lean
To her, their tending Queen.

THOMAS WOOLNER.

THERE IS A LADY

THERE is a Lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gesture, motion, and her smiles,
Her wit, her voice, my heart beguiles;
Beguiles my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is wingèd, and doth range
Her country, so my love doth change:
But change she earth, or change she sky,
Yet will I love her till I die.

From THOMAS FORD'S *Music of Sundry Kinds*, 1607.

AN EPITAPH

HERE lies a most beautiful lady,
Light of step and heart was she;
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.
But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble, who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

WALTER DE LA MARE.

THE MAIDS OF ELFIN-MERE

WHEN the spinning-room was here,
Came Three Damsels, clothed in white,
With their spindles every night;
One and two and three fair Maidens,
Spinning to a pulsing cadence,
Singing songs of Elfin-Mere;
Till the eleventh hour was toll'd,
Then departed through the wold.
Years ago, and years ago;
And the tall reeds sigh as the wind doth blow.

Three white Lilies, calm and clear,
And they were loved by everyone;
Most of all, the Pastor's son,
Listening to their gentle singing,
Felt his heart go from him, clinging
To these Maids of Elfin-Mere;
Sued each night to make them stay,
Sadden'd when they went away.
Years ago, and years ago;
And the tall reeds sigh as the wind doth blow.

Hands that shook with love and fear
Dared put back the village clock,—
Flew the spindle, turn'd the rock,
Flow'd the song with subtle rounding,
Till the false " eleven " was sounding;
Then these Maids of Elfin-Mere
Swiftly, softly left the room,
Like three doves on snowy plume.
Years ago, and years ago;
And the tall reeds sigh as the wind doth blow.

One that night who wander'd near
Heard lamentings by the shore,
Saw at dawn three stains of gore
In the waters fade and dwindle.
Never more with song and spindle
Saw we Maids of Elfin-Mere.
The Pastor's son did pine and die;
Because true love should never lie.
Years ago, and years ago;
And the tall reeds sigh as the wind doth blow.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

A SONG

OTHERS shall sing the song;
Others shall right the wrong;
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of, win.

What matter I or they;
Mine or another's day;
So the right word be said,
And life the sweeter made?

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

THE VIRGINIA CREEPER

WHEN first the Plants and Flow'rs had birth
Upon the pleasant happy earth,
They all were clad alike in green,
And other tints were never seen.

Till God sent down an Angel kind,
To give the Plants that he might find
A present of a pretty hue,
And Flow'rs a varied colour too.

The Angel gave the Rose its red,
Or white or yellow deep instead;
To Violets their glory fell,
And to all Flow'rs of mossy dell.

O'er hill and vale and field and wood,
With presents went that Angel good;
From vale and hill and wood and field,
Glad praises did the Flow'rs yield.

Then flamed the Poppy, bright and bold;
Then glowed the Crocus clad in gold;
The Snowdrop bowed her lovely head
While thankful prayers to God she said.

Nor lurked a plant in place forlorn
But some new beauty did adorn;
Save one poor Creeper very small,
That lay all hidden by a wall.

Poor Creeping-Plant! It sighed and sighed,
Then bravely to its duty hied—
And o'er the wall's bare ugliness,
The beauteous green began to press.

When Autumn came, to look around
The Angel came again, and found
The Creeper beautiful and glad
Though present it had never had.

Loud praised the Angel, and a blush
All crimson o'er the Plant did rush,
To think that simple duty done
Should favour in his sight have won.

When Autumn comes and Flow'rs decay,
Virginia Creepers look most gay;
For they remember how of old
An Angel loud their goodness told.

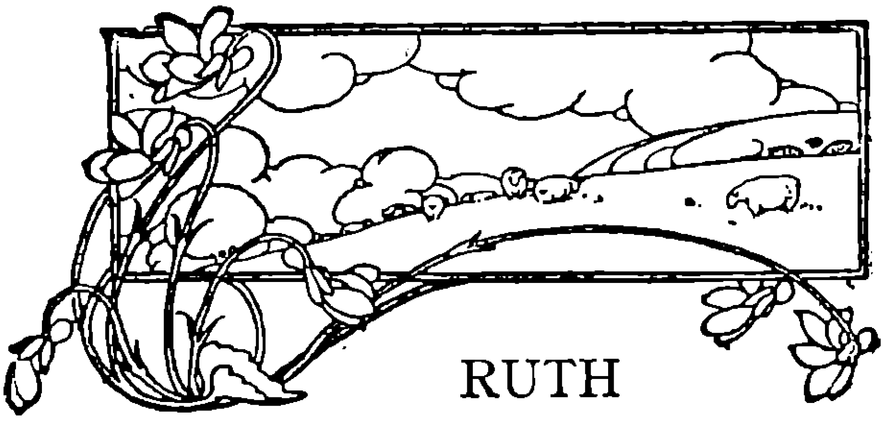
REED MOORHOUSE.

THE BEGGAR MAID

HER arms across her breast she laid;
  She was more fair than words can say:
Barefooted came the beggar maid
  Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down,
  To meet and greet her on her way;
" It is no wonder," said the lords,
  " She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
  She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
  One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
  In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
" This beggar maid shall be my queen! "

ALFRED TENNYSON.



RUTH

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripen'd;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest, none could tell,
But long lashes veil'd a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:—

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

THOMAS HOOD.

WAR, THE DESTROYER

LASTLY, stood War in glittering arms yclad,
With visage grim, stern looks, and blackly hued.
In his right hand a naked sword he had,
That to the hilt was all with blood embrued:
And in his left, that kings and kingdoms rued,
Famine and fire he held; and there withal
He razèd towns, and threw down towers and all.

Cities he sacked; and realms that whilom flowered
In honour, glory, and rule, above the best,
He overwhelmed; and all their fame devoured,
Consumed, destroyed, wasted, and never ceased
Till he their wealth, their name, and all opprest!
His face forhewed with wounds; and by his side
There hung his targe, with gashes deep and wide.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET.

OH, WAE BE TO THE ORDERS

OH, wae be to the orders that marched my luve awa',
And wae be to the cruel cause that gars my tears down fa';
Oh, wae be to the bluidy wars in high Germanie,
For they hae ta'en my luve and left a broken heart to me.

The drums beat in the morning before the scriech o' day,
And the wee, wee fifes played loud and shrill, while yet the morn was grey;
The bonnie flags were a' unfurl'd, a gallant sight to see,
But wae's me for my sodger lad that marched to Germanie.

Oh, lang, lang is the travel to the bonnie Pier o' Leith,
Oh, dreich it is to gang on foot wi' snaw-drift in the teeth!
And, oh, the cauld wind froze the tear that gathered in my e'e,
When I gade there to see my luve embark for Germanie!

I lookèd ower the braid blue sea, sae lang as could be seen
Ae wee bit sail upon the ship that my sodger lad was in;
But the wind was blowin' sair and snell, and the ship sailed speedilie,
And the waves and cruel wars hae twinned my winsome luve frae me.

William Motherwell.

A FAREWELL

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
An' fill it in a silver tassie;
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie:
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the Ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankèd ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody;

But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
  Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
  It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

ROBERT BURNS.

SONG OF THE SOLDIERS' WIVES

AT last! In sight of home again,
    Of home again;
No more to range and roam again
   As at that bygone time?
No more to go away from us
    And stay from us?—
Dawn, hold not long the day from us,
   But quicken it to prime!

Now all the town shall ring to them,
    Shall ring to them,
And we who love them cling to them
   And clasp them joyfully;
And cry, " O much we'll do for you
    Anew for you,
Dear Loves;—aye, draw and hew for you,
   Come back from oversea."

Some told us we should meet no more,
    Should meet no more;
Should wait, and wish, but greet no more
   Your faces round our fires;

That, in a while, uncharily
And drearily
Men gave their lives—even wearily,
Like those whom living tires.

And now you are nearing home again,
Dears, home again;
No more, may be, to roam again
As at that bygone time,
Which took you far away from us
To stay from us;
Dawn, hold not long the day from us,
But quicken it to prime!

THOMAS HARDY.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree.
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE.

SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND

SHE is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
   And lovers are round her sighing;
But coldly she turns from their gaze and weeps,
   For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
   Ev'ry note which he loved awaking;—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
   How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
   They were all that to life had entwined him;—
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
   Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
   When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,
   From her own loved island of sorrow.

THOMAS MOORE.

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

How sleep the Brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

WILLIAM COLLINS.

DIRGE FOR AN AMERICAN SOLDIER

CLOSE his eyes; his work is done.
  What to him is friend or foeman,
Rise of moon or set of sun,
  Hand of man or kiss of woman?
    Lay him low, lay him low,
      In the clover or the snow!
    What cares he? He cannot know.
      Lay him low.

As man may, he fought his fight,
  Proved his truth by his endeavour:
Let him sleep in solemn might,
  Sleep for ever and for ever.

Fold him in his country's stars,
  Roll the drum and fire the volley!
What to him are all our wars?
  What but death bemocking folly?

Leave him to God's watchful eye:
  Trust him to the hand that made him.
Mortal love weeps idly by:
  God alone has power to aid him.

GEORGE HENRY BOKER.

FAIRY SONG

'Tis not beyond a far star's gleaming,
Or realm but known to mortal dreaming,
Some hidden home of mystery,
    Where Fairies be.

But here, and now, beside you roving,
Where hearts with pity throb, and loving;
And faith is one with charity;
    There Fairies be.

Sheila Moore.

AUGURIES

A Robin Redbreast in a cage
Puts all heaven in a rage.
A dog starved at his master's gate
Predicts the ruin of the State.
A gamecock clipped and armed for fight
Doth the rising sun affright.
A horse misused upon the road
Calls to heaven for human blood.
Each outcry of the wounded hare
A fibre in the brain doth tear.
A skylark wounded on the wing
Doth make a cherub cease to sing.
He who shall hurt a little wren
Shall never be beloved by men.
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.
The lamb misused breeds public strife
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.

The bleat, the bark, the bellow and roar,
Are waves that beat on Heaven's shore.
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Cæsar's laurel crown.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE SNARE

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain!
  There is a rabbit in a snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
  But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
  He is calling out for aid;
Crying on the frightened air,
  Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,
  Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid;
  And I cannot find the place!

And I cannot find the place
  Where his paw is in the snare:
Little one! Oh, little one!
  I am searching everywhere.

JAMES STEPHENS.

THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

'Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

Ralph Hodgson.

A DREAM

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way,
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, wilder'd, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

" Oh, my children, do they cry?
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see;
Now return, and weep for me."

Pitying I dropped a tear:
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied, " What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

" I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round.
Follow now the beetle's hum:
Little wanderer, hie thee home! "

WILLIAM BLAKE.

POOR OLD HORSE

OH, once I lay in stable, a hunter well and warm,
I had the best of shelter from cold and rain and harm;
But now in open meadow, a hedge I'm glad to find,
To shield my sides from tempest, from driving sleet
and wind.
Poor old horse, let him die!

My shoulders once were sturdy, were glossy, smooth
and round,
But now, alas! they're rotten, I'm not accounted
sound.
As I have grown so aged, my teeth gone to decay,
My master frowns upon me; I often hear him say,
" Poor old horse, let him die! "

A groom upon me waited, on straw I snugly lay,
When fields were full of flowers, the air was sweet
with hay;
But now there's no good feeding prepared for me
at all,
I'm forced to munch the nettles upon the kennel wall.
Poor old horse, let him die!

My shoes and skin, the huntsman that covets them shall have,
My flesh and bones, the hounds, sir! I very freely give:
I've followed them full often; aye! many a score of miles,
O'er hedges, walls, and ditches, nor blinked at gates and stiles.
Poor old horse, let him die!

Ye gentlemen of England, ye sportsmen good and bold,
All ye that love a hunter, remember him when old;
Oh, put him in your stable, and make the old boy warm,
And visit him, and pat him, and keep him out of harm,
Poor old horse, till he die.

Old Song.

THE DONKEY

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
  Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
  I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
  One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
  And palms before my feet.

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON.

OF ST. FRANCIS AND THE ASS

OUR father, ere he went
Out with his brother, Death,
Smiling and well-content
As a bridegroom goeth,
Sweetly forgiveness prayed
From man or beast whom he
Had ever injurèd
Or burdened needlessly.

"Verily," then said he,
"I crave before I pass
Forgiveness full and free
Of my little brother, the ass.
Many a time and oft,
When winds and ways were hot,
He hath borne me cool and soft,
And service grudged me not.

And once it did betide
There was, unseen of me,
A gall upon his side
That suffered grievously.
And once his manger was
Empty, and bare, and brown
(Praise God for sweet, dry grass
That Bethlehem folk shook down).

" Consider, brethren," said he,
" Our little brother, how mild,
How patient, he will be,
Though men are fierce and wild.
His coat is grey and fine,
His eyes are kind with love;
This little brother of mine
Is gentle as the dove.

" Consider how such an one
Beheld our Saviour born,
And carried him, full-grown,
Through Eastern streets one morn.
For this the Cross is laid
Upon him for a sign.
Greatly is honourèd
This little brother of mine."

And even while he spake,
Down in his stable stall,
His little ass 'gan shake
And turned its face to the wall.
Down fell the heavy tear,
Its gaze so mournful was,
Fra Leo, standing near,
Pitied the little ass.

That night our father died,
All night the kine did low;
The ass went heavy-eyed
With patient tears and slow;
The very birds on wings
Made mournful cries in the air.
Amen! All living things
Our father's brethren were.

KATHERINE TYNAN HINKSON.

THE TEMPTATION OF SAINT ANTHONY

(*Adapted from an Old French Chanson*)

GOBLINS came, on mischief bent,
To Saint Anthony in Lent.

" Come, ye goblins, small and big,
We will kill the hermit's pig.

" While the good monk minds his book
We the hams will cure and cook.

" While he goes down on his knees
We will fry the sausages.

" While he on his breast doth beat
We will grill the tender feet.

" While he David's Psalms doth sing
We will all to table bring."

On his knees went Anthony
To those imps of Barbary.

" Good, kind goblins, spare his life,
He to me is child and wife.

" He indeed is good and mild
As 'twere any chrisom child.

" He is my felicity,
Spare, oh spare my pig to me! "

But the pig they did not spare,
Did not heed the hermit's prayer.

They the hams did cure and cook,
Still the good Saint read his book.

When they fried the sausages
Still he rose not from his knees.

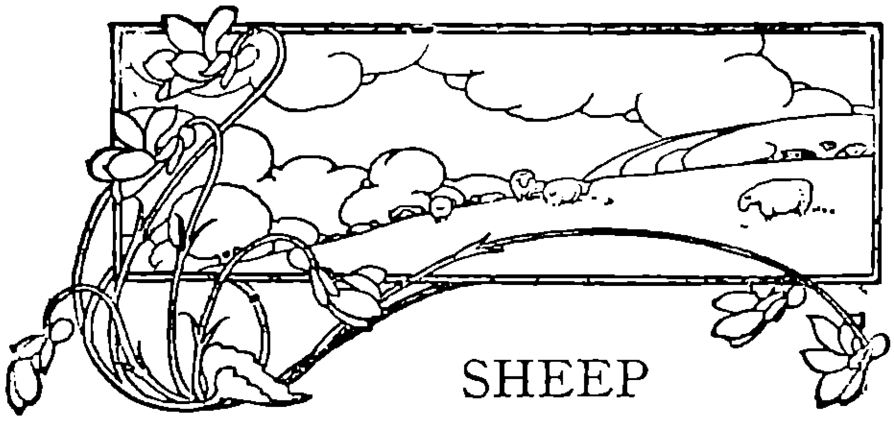
When they grilled the tender feet
He ceased not his breast to beat.

They did all to table bring,
He for grace the Psalms did sing.

All at once the morning broke,
From his dream the monk awoke.

There in the kind light of day
Was the little pig at play

RICHARD L. GALES.



SHEEP

WHEN I was once in Baltimore
  A man came up to me and cried,
" Come, I have eighfeen hundred sheep,
  And we will sail on Tuesday's tide.

" If you will sail with me, young man,
  I'll pay you fifty shillings down;
These eighteen hundred sheep I take
  From Baltimore to Glasgow town."

He paid me fifty shillings down,
  I sailed with eighteen hundred sheep;
We soon had cleared the harbour's mouth,
  We soon were in the salt sea deep.

The first night we were out at sea
  Those sheep were quiet in their mind;
The second night they cried with fear—
  They smelt no pastures in the wind.

They sniffed, poor things, for their green fields,
  They cried so loud I could not sleep:
For fifty thousand shillings down
  I would not sail again with sheep.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES.

FALSE FRIENDS-LIKE

WHEN I was still a boy and mother's pride,
A bigger boy spoke up to me so kind-like,
" If you do like, I'll treat you with a ride
In this wheelbarrow." So then I was blind-like
To what he had a-working in his mind-like,
And mounted for a passenger inside;
And coming to a puddle—pretty wide,
He tipp'd me in a-grinning back behind-like.
So when a man may come to me so thick-like,
And shake my hand where once he passed me by,
And tell me he would do me this or that,
I can't help thinking of the big boy's trick-like,
And then, for all I can but wag my hat,
And thank him, I do feel a little shy.

WILLIAM BARNES.

A CHANTED CALENDAR

FIRST came the primrose
On the bank high;
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So look'd she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind;
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has roll'd by
Wanders to and fro,
So totter'd she,
Dishevell'd in the wind

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May;
Like a banner'd show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way;
With ten thousand flowers about them they
    came trooping through the fields;
As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has roll'd away,
With dance and tabor, pipe, and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip;
Like a dancer in the fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she.
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

THE SNOWDROP

MANY, many welcomes,
February fair-maid;
Ever as of old time,
Solitary firstling;
Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses;
Many, many welcomes,
February fair-maid!

ALFRED TENNYSON.

TO VIOLETS

Welcome, Maids of Honour,
    You do bring
    In the Spring,
And wait upon her.

She has Virgins many,
    Fresh and fair,
    Yet you are
More sweet than any.

You're the Maiden Posies;
    And so graced,
    To be placed
'Fore Damask Roses.

—Yet, though thus respected,
    By and by,
    Ye do lie,
Poor Girls, neglected.

Robert Herrick.

WHITE VIOLETS

(A legend of Saint Fina)

SWEET Saint Fina crippled lay
Meekly on from day to day,
And her bed was but a board,
Like the Cross of Christ, her Lord.

She, reminded of her Lord,
Tuned her heart unto His Word,
That like Him she too might be,
Bearing sorrows patiently.

Ever sang she through the hours:
" *Glory, God! for summer flowers:*
Glory, God! when they lie low
Dead beneath the winter snow.

" *Glory, God! for loss and gain,*
For the pleasure and the pain:
Glory, God! for gain and loss,
For the Crown and for the Cross."

Day by day, and week by week,
Pilgrims would her presence seek;
God His praises taught to sing
Through a maiden's suffering.

Died she stretched upon a board
Like the Master she adored:
But when she away was ta'en
From her earthly bed of pain,

By the pilgrims then were seen,
Where her body long had been,
All in shining glory grew
Violets snow-white in hue.

Glory, God! for loss and gain,
For the pleasure and the pain:
Glory, God! for gain and loss,
For the Crown and for the Cross.

HAROLD HALMYR.

NARCISSUS AND ECHO

NARCISSUS was fair of face,
So to pass it came,
Sweetest Echo wandering
Saw him stand beside a spring,
Grew enamoured of his grace;
 Fie for shame!

Love could ne'er Narcissus stir,
So it came to pass,
He would not the nymph rejoice,
So she pined until her voice
All alone was left of her;
 Oh, alas!

Narcissus conceited grew,
So to pass it came,
All day in a stream he'd gaze,
Smiling at his pretty face,
Throwing kisses one and two;
 Fie for shame!

Stood he there for many an hour,
Till it came to pass,
Bending o'er the mirror stream
That he fell into a dream.
When he woke he was a flower;
    Oh, alas!

From *The Golden World.*

THE LOBSTER QUADRILLE

"WILL you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail.
"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the dance?
  Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?
  Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

"You can really have no notion how delightful it will be,
When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!"
But the snail replied, "Too far, too far!" and gave a look askance—
Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not join the dance,
  Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance,
  Would not, could not, would not, could not, could not join the dance.

"What matters it how far we go?" his scaly
friend replied.
"There is another shore, you know, upon the
other side.
The further off from England the nearer is to
France—
Then turn not pale, belovèd snail, but come and
join the dance.
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will
you join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't
you join the dance?"

LEWIS CARROLL.

THE MERMAID

I

WHO would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combing her hair
Under the sea,
In a golden curl
With a comb of pearl,
On a throne?

II

I would be a mermaid fair;
I would sing to myself the whole of the day;
With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair;
And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,

" Who is it loves me? who loves not me? "
I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall,
Low adown, low adown,
From under my starry sea-bud crown
Low adown and around;
And I should look like a fountain of gold
Springing alone
With a shrill inner sound,
Over the throne
In the midst of the hall;
Till that great sea-snake under the sea
From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate
With his large calm eyes for the love of me.
And all the mermen under the sea
Would feel their immortality
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III

But at night I would wander away, away,
I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,
And lightly vault from the throne and play
With the mermen in and out of the rocks;
We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,
On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson shells,
Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.
But if any came near I would call, and shriek,
And adown the steep like a wave I would leap
From the diamond-ledges that jut from the dells;
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list,
Of the bold merry mermen under the sea;
They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me,

In the purple twilights under the sea;
But the king of them all would carry me,
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
In the branching jaspers under the sea;
Then all the dry pied things that be
In the hueless mosses under the sea
Would curl round my silver feet silently,
All looking up for the love of me.
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
All things that are forked, and horned, and soft
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,
All looking down for the love of me.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shoreward blow;
Now the salt tides seawards flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go—
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear:
Children's voices wild with pain—
Surely she will come again!

Call her once, and come away;
This way, this way!
" Mother dear, we cannot stay! "
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down!
        Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town
And the little grey church on the windy shore,
        Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day.
        Come away, come away!
Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
      In the caverns where we lay,
      Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt-weed sways in the stream;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail, and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
      When did music come this way?
      Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,

On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee."
I said: " Go up, dear heart, through the waves!
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
" The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, " in the world they say.
Come! " I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town.
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
" Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone.

The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy,
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well—
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessèd light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.

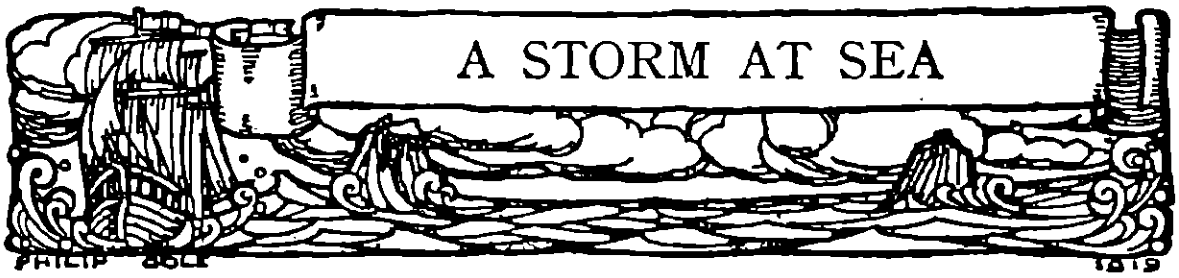
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand;
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children,
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;

Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl:
Singing, " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she,
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow;
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down:
Singing, " There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



A STORM AT SEA

THEY that go down to the sea in ships,
And occupy their business in great waters;

These men see the works of the Lord,
And His wonders in the deep.

For at His word the stormy wind ariseth,
Which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heaven, and down again
to the deep,
Their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wits' end.

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,
He delivereth them out of their distress.

For He maketh the storm to cease,
So that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they are at rest:
And so He bringeth them unto the haven where
they would be.

Psalm cvii.

THE MILKMAID

Across the grass I see her pass;
  She comes with tripping pace,—
A maid I know,—and March winds blow
  Her hair across her face;—
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

The March winds blow. I watch her go;
  Her eye is brown and clear;
Her cheek is brown, and soft as down
  (To those who see it near!)—
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

What has she not that those have got,—
  The dames that walk in silk!
If she undo her kerchief blue,
  Her neck is white as milk.
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

Let those who will be proud and chill!
  For me, from June to June,
My Dolly's words are sweet as curds—
  Her laugh is like a tune;—

With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Break, break to hear, O crocus-spear!
O tall Lent-lilies, flame!
There'll be a bride at Easter-time,
And Dolly is her name.
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

IT WAS A LOVER

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crownèd with the prime
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

EARL MAR'S DAUGHTER

It was intill a pleasant time,
  Upon a summer's day,
The noble Earl Mar's daughter
  Went forth to sport and play.

And as she play'd and sported
  Below the green oak tree,
There she saw a sprightly doo
  Set on a branch so hie.

" O Coo-my-doo, my Love so true,
  If ye'll come down to me,
Ye'll have a cage of good red gold
  Instead of simple tree."

And she had not these words well spoke,
  Nor yet these words well said,
Till Coo-my-doo flew from the branch,
  And lighted on her head.

Then she has brought this pretty bird
  Home to her bower and hall,
And made him shine as fair a bird
  As any of them all.

When day was gone and night was come,
  About the evening-tide,
This lady spied a sprightly youth
  Stand straight up by her side.

" O who are ye, young man? " she said
  " What country come ye frae? "
—" I flew across the sea," he said,
  " 'Twas but this very day.

" My mother is a queen," he says,
  " Likewise of magic skill;
'Twas she that turn'd me in a doo,
  To fly where'er I will.

" And it was but this very day
  That I came o'er the sea:
I loved you at a single look;
  With you I'll live and dee."

—" O Coo-my-doo, my Love so true,
  No more from me ye'll gae."
—" That's never my intent, my Love;
  As ye said, it shall be sae."

Thus he has stay'd in bower with her
  For twenty years and three;
Till there came a lord of high renown
  To court this fair ladye.

But still his proffer she refused,
  And all his presents too;
Says, " I'm content to live alone
  With my bird Coo-my-doo."

Her father sware a solemn oath
  Among the nobles all,
" To-morrow, ere I eat or drink,
  That bird I'll surely kill."

The bird was sitting in his cage,
And heard what he did say;
He jump'd upon the window-sill:
" 'Tis time I was away."

Then Coo-my-doo took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea,
And lighted at his mother's castle,
On a tower of gold so hie.

The Queen his mother was walking out,
To see what she could see,
And there she saw her darling son
Set on the tower so hie.

" Get dancers here to dance," she said,
" And minstrels for to play;
For here's my dear son Florentine
Come back with me to stay."

—" Instead of dancers to dance, mother,
Or minstrels for to play;
Turn four-and-twenty well-wight men
Like storks, in feather grey;

" My seven sons in seven swans,
Above their heads to flee;
And I myself a gay goshawk,
A bird of high degree."

This flock of birds took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea;
They landed near the Earl Mar's castle,
Took shelter in every tree.

These birds flew up from bush and tree,
And lighted on the hall;
And when the wedding-train came forth
Flew down among them all.

The storks they seized the boldest men,
That they could not fight or flee;
The swans they bound the bridegroom fast
Unto a green oak tree.

They flew around the bride-maidens,
Then on the bride's own head;
And with the twinkling of an eye,
The bride and they were fled.

Old Ballad.

A RED, RED ROSE

O MY Luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
O I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

ROBERT BURNS.

SWEET AS THE BREATH OF THE WHIN

Sweet as the breath of the whin
  Is the thought of my love—
Sweet as the breath of the whin
  In the noonday sun—
Sweet as the breath of the whin
  In the sun after rain.

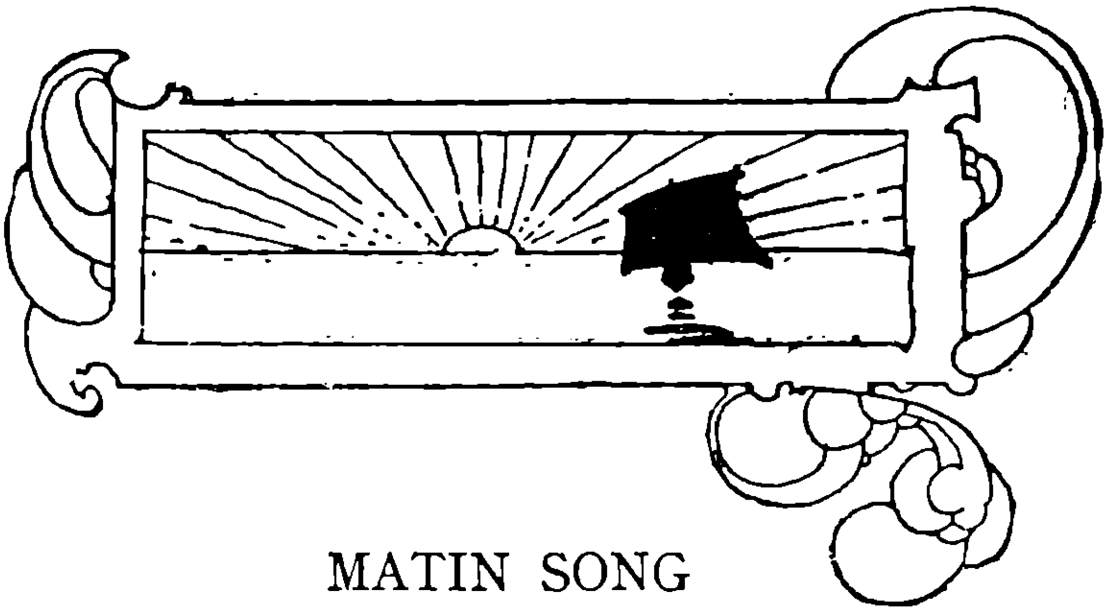
Glad as the gold of the whin
  Is the thought of my love—
Glad as the gold of the whin
  Since wandering's done—
Glad as the gold of the whin
  Is my heart, home again.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

THE WIFE OF LLEW

And Gwydion said to Math, when it was Spring:
" Come now and let us make a wife for Llew,"
And so they broke broad boughs yet moist with dew,
And in a shadow made a magic ring:
They took the violet and the meadow-sweet
To form her pretty face, and for her feet
They built a mound of daisies on a wing,
And for her voice they made a linnet sing
In the wide poppy blowing for her mouth.
And over all they chanted twenty hours.
And Llew came singing from the azure south
And bore away his wife of birds and flowers.

Francis Ledwidge.



MATIN SONG

PACK, clouds, away! and welcome, day!
  With night we banish sorrow.
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, lark, aloft
  To give my Love good-morrow!
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
  Notes from the lark I'll borrow:
Bird, prune thy wing! nightingale, sing!
  To give my Love good-morrow!
    To give my Love good-morrow
    Notes from them all I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin red-breast!
  Sing, birds, in every furrow!
And from each bill let music shrill
  Give my fair Love good-morrow!
Blackbird and thrush, in every bush,
  Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, among yourselves
  Sing my fair Love good-morrow!
    To give my Love good-morrow
    Sing, birds, in every furrow!

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

MY LADY GREENSLEEVES

ALAS! my love, you do me wrong
To cast me off discourteously;
And I have lovèd you so long,
Delighting in your company.
Greensleeves was all my joy!
Greensleeves was my delight!
Greensleeves was my heart of gold!
And who but my Lady Greensleeves!

I bought thee petticoats of the best,
The cloth so fine as fine might be;
I gave thee jewels for thy chest,
And all this cost I spent on thee.
Greensleeves was all my joy!
Greensleeves was my delight!
Greensleeves was my heart of gold!
And who but my Lady Greensleeves!

Thy smock of silk, both fair and white,
With gold embroidered gorgeously;
Thy petticoat of sendal right:
And these I bought thee gladly.
Greensleeves was all my joy!
Greensleeves was my delight!
Greensleeves was my heart of gold!
And who but my Lady Greensleeves!

Greensleeves, now farewell! adieu!
God I pray to prosper thee!
For I am still thy lover true:
Come once again and love me!
Greensleeves was all my joy!
Greensleeves was my delight!
Greensleeves was my heart of gold!
And who but my Lady Greensleeves!

Anonymous.

DAFFODIL

BATTE

GORBO, as thou cam'st this way,
  By yonder little hill,
Or as thou through the fields did'st stray,
  Saw'st thou my Daffodil?

She's in a frock of Lincoln green,
  Which colour likes her sight,
And never hath her beauty seen,
  But through a veil of white;

Than roses richer to behold,
  That trim up lovers' bowers,
The pansy and the marigold,
  Though Phœbus' paramours.

GORBO

Thou well describ'st the daffodil;
  It is not full an hour
Since by the spring, near yonder hill,
  I saw that lovely flower.

BATTE

Yet my fair flower thou did'st not meet
  Nor news of her did'st bring,
And yet my Daffodil's more sweet
  Than that by yonder spring.

GORBO

I saw a shepherd that doth keep
  In yonder field of lilies,
Was making (as he fed his sheep)
  A wreath of daffodillies.

BATTE

Yet, Gorbo, thou delud'st me still,
My flower thou did'st not see;
For, know, my pretty Daffodil
Is worn of none but me.

To show itself but near her feet
No lily is so bold,
Except to shade her from the heat,
Or keep her from the cold.

GORBO

Through yonder vale as I did pass,
Descending from the hill,
I met a smirking bonny lass,
They call her Daffodil:

Whose presence, as along she went,
The pretty flowers did greet,
As though their heads they downward bent
With homage to her feet.

And all the shepherds that were nigh,
From top of every hill,
Unto the valleys loud did cry,
"There goes sweet Daffodil."

BATTE

Ay, gentle shepherd, now with joy
Thou all my flocks dost fill;
That's she alone, kind shepherd boy;
Let us to Daffodil.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

LONE DOG

I'M a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls
from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat;
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff, and kick,
and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side,
Some have run a short while, but none of them
would bide.
O mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and the hunger of the
quest!

IRENE R. McLEOD.

TIM, AN IRISH TERRIER

IT'S wonderful dogs they're breeding now:
Small as a flea or large as a cow;
But my old lad Tim he'll never be bet
By any dog that ever he met.
" Come on," says he, " for I'm not kilt yet."

No matter the size of the dog he'll meet,
Tim trails his coat the length o' the street.
D'ye mind his scars an' his ragged ear,
The like of a Dublin Fusilier?
He's a massacree dog that knows no fear.

But he'd stick to me till his latest breath;
An' he'd go with me to the gates of death.
He'd wait for a thousand years, maybe,
Scratching the door an' whining for me
If myself were inside in Purgatory.

So I laugh when I hear thim make it plain
That dogs and men never meet again.
For all their talk who'd listen to thim,
With the soul in the shining eyes of him?
Would God be wasting a dog like Tim?

WINIFRED M. LETTS.

THE HARPER

ON the green banks of Shannon when Sheelah was nigh
No blithe Irish lad was so happy as I;
No harp like my own could so cheerily play,
And wherever I went was my poor dog Tray.

When at last I was forced from my Sheelah to part,
She said (while the sorrow was big at her heart),
"Oh! remember your Sheelah when far, far away;
And be kind, my dear Pat, to our poor dog Tray."

Poor dog! he was faithful and kind, to be sure,
And he constantly loved me, although I was poor;
When the sour-looking folks sent me heartless away,
I had always a friend in my poor dog Tray.

When the road was so dark, and the night was so cold,
And Pat and his dog had grown weary and old,
How snugly we slept in my old coat of grey,
And he licked me for kindness, my poor dog Tray.

Though my wallet was scant, I remembered his case,
Nor refused my last crust to his pitiful face;
But he died at my feet on a cold winter day,
And I played a lament for my poor dog Tray.

Where now shall I go—poor, forsaken, and blind?
Can I find one to guide me so faithful and kind?
To my sweet native village, so far, far away,
I can never return with my poor dog Tray.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

GOOD people all, of every sort,
  Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,—
  It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
  Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,—
  Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
  To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,—
  When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
  As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound,
  And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
The wondering neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

ON A FLY DRINKING OUT OF HIS CUP

BUSY, curious, thirsty fly!
Drink with me and drink as I:
Freely welcome to my cup,
Couldst thou sip and sip it up:
Make the most of life you may,
Life is short and wears away.

Both alike are mine and thine
Hastening quick to their decline:
Thine's a summer, mine's no more,
Though repeated to threescore.
Threescore summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one!

WILLIAM OLDYS

THE SCARECROW

A SCARECROW stood in a field one day,
    Stuffed with straw,
    Stuffed with hay;
He watched the folk on the king's highway,
But never a word said he.

Much he saw but naught did heed,
    Knowing not night,
    Knowing not day,
For, having naught, did nothing need,
And never a word said he.

A little grey mouse had made its nest,
    Oh so wee,
    Oh so grey,
In the sleeve of a coat that was poor Tom's best,
But the scarecrow naught said he.

His hat was the home of a small jenny wren,
    Ever so sweet,
    Ever so gay;
A squirrel had put by his fear of men
And kissed him, but naught heeded he.

Ragged old man, I love him well,
    Stuffed with straw,
    Stuffed with hay;
Many's the tale that he could tell,
But never a word says he.

MICHAEL FRANKLIN.

MEG MERRILIES

Old Meg she was a gipsy,
  And lived upon the moors;
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
  And her house was out of doors.
Her apples were swart blackberries,
  Her currants pods o' broom;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
  Her book a churchyard tomb.

Her brothers were the craggy hills,
  Her sisters larchen trees;
Alone with her great family
  She lived as she did please.
No breakfast had she many a morn,
  No dinner many a noon,
And 'stead of supper she would stare
  Full hard against the moon.

But every morn of woodbine fresh
  She made her garlanding,
And every night the dark glen yew
  She wore; and she would sing,
And with her fingers old and brown
  She plaited mats of rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
  She met among the bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen,
  And tall as Amazon;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
  A ship-hat had she on;
God rest her aged bones somewhere!
  She died full long agone!

John Keats.

WANDER-THIRST

O WHO will come a-wandering
  Afar afield with me,
To where the road lies roughest
  And long as long can be?
There where the ways are hardest
  We'll tramp in rain or shine,
For I must quench the wander-thirst
  That's in this heart of mine.

Far from the beaten highway
  All toilsomely we'll plod,
Leaving the plains and people
  To seek the hills and God.
We'll scale the peak that's highest,
  And sip the cold wind's wine,
For I must quench thy wander-thirst,
  O ardent heart of mine.

On till the shadows lengthen,
  On till the strong limbs tire;
And, spent, we'll watch the sunset
  Make all the skies afire;
Then send our souls a-drifting
  Upon Heaven's sea divine—
Earth cannot quench thy wander-thirst,
  O weary heart of mine.

LILY ELISE

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

THE WEST WIND

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes.
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as mine,
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the nest.

" Will you not come home, brother? You have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the spray:
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain,
Will you not come home, brother, home to us again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits
run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain
and sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's
brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring
again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the
green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest your
tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for
aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must
tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for
heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the
thrushes' song
In the fine land, the west land, the land where
I belong.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

SWEET TO THE MORNING TRAVELLER

SWEET to the morning traveller
  The song amid the sky,
Where, twinkling in the dewy light,
  The skylark soars on high.

And cheering to the traveller
  The gales that round him play,
When faint and heavily he drags
  Along his noontide way.

And when beneath the unclouded sun
  Full wearily toils he,
The flowing water makes to him
  A soothing melody.

And when the evening light decays,
  And all is calm around,
There is sweet music to the ear
  In the distant sheep-bells' sound.

But oh! of all delightful sounds
  Of evening or of morn,
The sweetest is the voice of love
  That welcomes his return.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

A LULLABY

Beat upon mine, little heart! beat, beat!
Beat upon mine! you are mine, my sweet!
All mine from your pretty blue eyes to your feet,
My sweet.

Sleep, little blossom, my honey, my bliss!
For I give you this, and I give you this!
And I blind your pretty blue eyes with a kiss!
Sleep!

Father and Mother will watch you grow,
And gather the roses whenever they blow,
And find the white heather wherever you go,
My sweet.

Alfred Tennyson.

BABY'S SONG

Is it the apple-blossom, or is it the whole blue sky?
What would you have, then, baby, reaching from mother's breast?
See, shall I get you the moon from the east, the sun from the west?
If you'd the morning star in your crib with you, would you rest?
If you'd the little white clouds with a string to hold them by?

Tired is it, then? Aye, turn thee, reaching to mother's breast.
You took the flowers of the earth, and all the stars in the sky,

And the sun and the moon in your hands for a
minute and threw them by:
And, lost like drops in the sea, in the deep of her
heart they lie,
The heart of her love, that folds you, and holds you
and rocks you to rest.

JOHN HALSHAM.

LITTLE DEAR-MY-SOUL

OH hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,
The evening shades are falling,—
Hush thee, my dear, dost thou not hear
The voice of the Master calling?

Deep lies the snow upon the earth,
But all the sky is ringing
With joyous song, and all night long
The stars shall dance with singing.

Oh hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,
And close thine eyes in dreaming,
And angels fair shall lead thee where
The singing stars are beaming.

A Shepherd calls His little lambs,
And He longeth to caress them;
He bids them rest upon His breast,
That His tender love may bless them.

So hush thee, little Dear-my-soul,
Whilst evening shades are falling,
And above the song of the heavenly throng
Thou shalt hear the Master calling.

EUGENE FIELD.

A CRADLE SONG

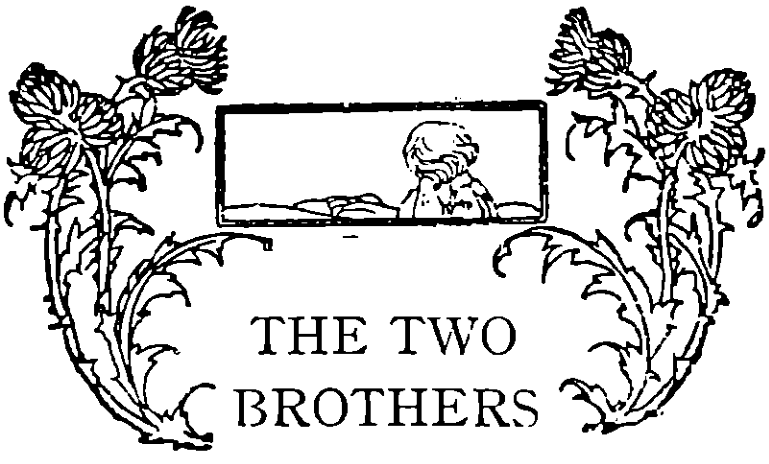
O, MEN from the fields!
  Come gently within.
Tread softly, softly,
  O! men coming in.

Mavourneen is going
  From me and from you,
Where Mary will fold him
  With mantle of blue!

From reek of the smoke
  And cold of the floor,
And the peering of things
  Across the half-door.

O, men from the fields!
  Soft, softly come thro'.
Mary puts round him
  Her mantle of blue.

PADRAIC COLUM.



THE TWO BROTHERS

THERE were two brothers at the school,
  And when they got awa',
" It's will ye play at the stone-chucking,
  Or will ye play at the ball,
Or will ye go up to yon hill head,
  And there we'll wrestle a fall? "

" I will not play at the stone-chucking,
  Nor will I play at the ball;
But I'll go up to yon bonnie green hill,
  And there we'll wrestle a fall."

They wrestled up, they wrestled down,
  Till John fell to the ground,
A dirk fell out of William's pouch,
  And gave John a deadly wound.

" Oh lift me up upon your back,
  Take me to yon well fair,
And wash my bleeding wounds again
  And they will bleed no mair.

  And take now off my green clothing,
  And roll me softly in,
And take me up to yon church stile
  Where the grass grows fair and green."

He's taken off the green clothing,
  And rolled him softly in;
He's laid him down by yon church stile
  Where the grass grows fair and green.

" What will you say to your father dear,
  When you go home at e'en? "
" I'll say you're lying at yon church stile
  Where the grass grows fair and green."

" Oh no, oh no, my brother dear,
  Oh you must not say so;
But say that I'm gone to a foreign land,
  Where no man does me know."

When he sat in his father's chair,
  He grew full pale to see:
" Oh what blood's that upon your brow?
  O dear son, tell to me."
" It is the blood of my good grey steed,
  He would not ride with me."

" Oh thy steed's blood was ne'er so red,
  Nor e'er so dear to me:
Oh what blood's this upon your cheek?
  O dear son, tell to me."
" It is the blood of my greyhound,
  He would not hunt for me."

" Oh thy hound's blood was ne'er so red,
  Nor e'er so dear to me:
Oh what blood's this upon your hand?
  O dear son, tell to me."
" It is the blood of my gay goshawk,
  He would not fly for me."

" Oh thy hawk's blood was ne'er so red,
Nor e'er so dear to me:
Oh what blood's this upon your dirk?
Dear Willie, tell to me."
" It is the blood of my own brother,
Oh dole and woe is me! "

" Oh what will ye say to your father?
Dear Willie, tell to me."
" I'll saddle my steed, and away I'll ride,
To dwell in some far country."

" Oh when will ye come home again?
Dear Willie, tell to me."
" When sun and moon leap on yon hill,
And that will never be."

She turned herself right round about;
And her heart burst into three:
" My one best son is dead and gone,
And the other I'll ne'er see."

Old Ballad.

HEIGH HO!

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
When the wind wakes how they rock in the grasses,
And dance with the cuckoo-buds, slender and small!
Here's two bonny boys, and here's mother's own lasses,
Eager to gather them all.

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups:
  Mother shall thread them a daisy chain;
Sing them a song of the pretty hedge-sparrow,
  That loved her brown little ones, loved them full fain;
Sing, " Heart, thou art wide, though the house be but narrow "—
      Sing once, and sing it again.

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
  Sweet wagging cowslips they bend and they bow;
A ship sails afar over warm ocean waters,
  And haply one musing doth stand at her prow.
O bonny brown sons, and O sweet little daughters,
      Maybe he thinks on you now!

Heigh ho! daisies and buttercups,
  Fair yellow daffodils stately and tall;
A sunshiny world full of laughter and leisure,
  And fresh hearts unconscious of sorrow and thrall;
Send down on their pleasure smiles passing its measure—
      God, that is over us all.

JEAN INGELOW.

CHRYSANTHEMUM

WHEN first the Earth turned round all gay,
  No Flowers grew;
In heavenly fields they sleeping lay,
  And soundly too.

Arise! " an Angel cried, Arise!
  It is the morn
When you must leave the sunny skies
  The Earth to adorn."

They rose in haste to Earth to come,
  Save Flow'ret one:
For, hearing naught, Chrysanthemum
  Still slumbered on.

The others washed their faces clean,
  And combed their hair,
Before Chrysanthemum was seen
  A-sleeping there.

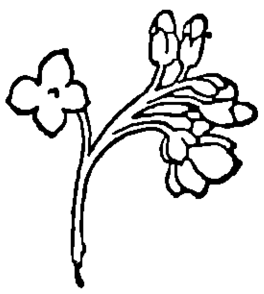
They roused him with a tender mirth,
  With shake and pull;
" Wake up! we have to make the Earth
  Look beautiful."

Chrysanthemum awoke to see
  The Flowers fair
Start for the Earth: no time had he
  To comb his hair.

He had but time to wash his face,
  And rather than
Refuse on Earth to take his place,
  Away he ran.

Your petal-locks, Chrysanthemum,
  Are still the same;
But glad, as you to us to come,
  Are we you came.

From *The Golden World.*



IF STARS DROPPED

IF stars dropped out of heaven,
And if flowers took their place,
The sky would still look very fair;
And fair, earth's face.

Winged angels might fly down to us
To pluck the stars,
But we could only long for flowers
Beyond the cloudy bars.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

TO BLOSSOMS

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

ROBERT HERRICK.

GARDEN LILIES

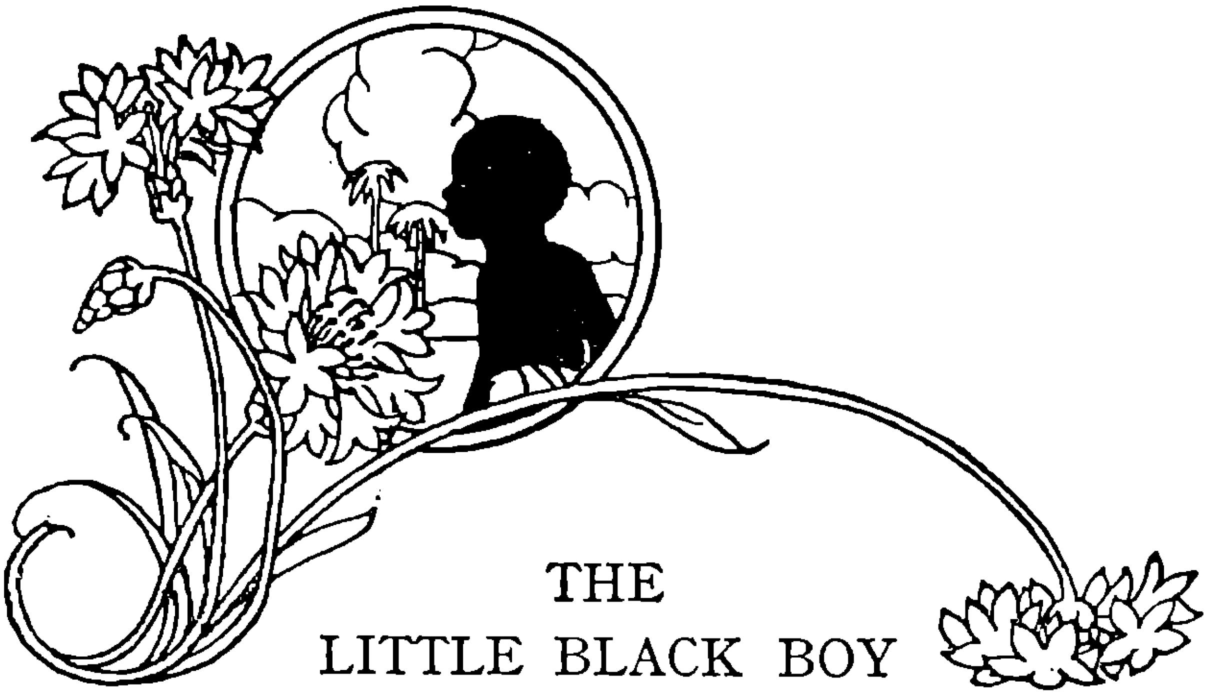
We are lilies fair,
  The flower of virgin light;
Nature held us forth, and said,
  "Lo, my thoughts of white!"

Ever since then, angels
  Hold us in their hands;
You may see them where they take,
  In pictures, their sweet stands.

Like the garden's angels
  Likewise do we seem;
And not the less for being crowned
  With a golden dream.

Could you see around us
  The sweet fragrant air,
You would see it pale with bliss
  To hold a thing so fair.

LEIGH HUNT.



THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
  And I am black, but O my soul is white;
White as an angel is the English child,
  But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
  And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
  And, pointing to the east, began to say:

" Look on the rising sun,—there God does live,
  And gives His light, and gives His heat away;
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
  Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

 And we are put on earth a little space,
  That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
  Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

" For when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
  The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,
Saying: 'Come out from the grove, My love and care,
  And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice' "

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me;
  And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
  And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
  To lean in joy upon our father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
  And be like him, and he will then love me.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

WHEN my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry, 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!
So your chimneys I sweep and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,
" Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet: and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight,
That thousands of sleepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins and set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work;
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy
    and warm:
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

IS THIS A HOLY THING TO SEE

Is this a holy thing to see
  In a rich and fruitful land—
Babes reduced to misery,
  Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
  Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor!
  Is it a land of poverty?

And their sun does never shine,
  And their fields are bleak and bare,
And their ways are filled with thorns:
  It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine,
  And where'er the rain does fall,
Babes should never hunger there,
  Nor poverty the mind appal.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

GRANDFATHER MISERY

OLD Grandfather Misery, nimbly enough—
He really is made of the strongest of stuff—
Still trots him for ever from cottage to cottage,
Though ancient enough to be now in his dotage.

One evening when taking his usual course,
He met the grim Death who was riding a horse,
His face was appalling, his mien it was bold,
His horse was as marble, as white and as cold.

" Good e'en," quoth Grandfather, " whom look ye
to see? "
" For Misery look I." " He's talking to thee."
" Then mount up behind me and off we will go
Towards the Hereafter above and below."

" I pray thee, I pray thee, to tarry a time;
The trees they are leafless and covered with rime,
And I am so busy when poor people want,
And therefore I pray thee time longer to grant.

" The crops have all failed them, their store is all
done,
And Grandfather Misery is not the one
To wish to desert those he always has tended:
The Poor has old Misery always befriended."

So off galloped Death over valley and hill,
Through town and through village, by meadow
and rill,
And many upon his white charger did go
Towards the Hereafter above and below.

But Misery ancient enough for his dotage
He left just to amble from cottage to cottage.
Oh! if on Death's horse our old Gran'dad had got,
I'm sure we poor people would miss him a lot.

HAROLD HALMYR.

JOHN THE PRIEST

JOHN the Priest of Corna dale
  Late crowned with scholar's bays;
Now sent to teach a rustic flock,
  Had cursed his dreary days.

Far on the slopes of North Barrule
  The Corna valley lies;
And far remote the lonely keeill[1]
  That seems so near the skies.

So few and simple were the folk
  And scattered through the vale—
What honour should a scholar find
  In savage Corna dale?

Now John the Priest he laid him down
  Upon his pallet bare;
And John he heard or dreamed he heard
  Soft voices in the air.

" Glory to God," they sang once more
  As heralds from on high;
And John he rose or dreamed he rose,
  But nought could he espy.

[1] An early Celtic church.

Grey sheets of mist were rolling up,
And pouring through the vale;
When through a rift shone steps of gold—
From Heaven to Corna dale.

And John he saw, or thought he saw,
Or dreamed he thought he saw,
His Master on those shining steps,
And bowed himself in awe.

" My Corna sheep are dear to Me
As any in the fold,
My Corna dale is near to me
As Lebanon of old.

" Thine is the work to save these sheep,
Thy glory let it be;
For every soul in Corna dale
Thou, John, wilt answer me! "

The cloud uplift: the sun sprang up
And sparkled through the vale;
A score of pearly smoke-wreaths rose
To Heaven from Corna dale.

Then John the Priest stretched forth his hands
And blessed the rising sun,
And blessed the simple folk around,
And taught them one by one.

No book nor script could there be found,
But on rough slabs of rock
He cut and graved as best he might
The lessons for his flock.

And that himself should ne'er forget
His vision in the vale,
He carved—" Of all the sheep is John
The Priest in Corna dale."

Far on the slopes of old Barrule
Lone lies the ruined keeill,
And there the words of John the Priest
In Runes are living still.

JOSEPHINE KERMODE.

THE POET'S SONG

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of the street;
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat;
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the fly,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey;
And the nightingale thought, " I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

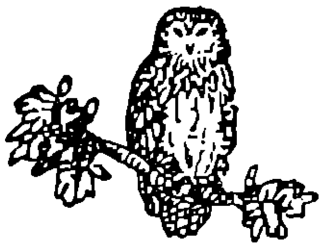
ALFRED TENNYSON.

APRIL

THE soft-cushioned feet
   Of the Spring-god are set
Where yew branches meet;
   And the mosses are wet
Under chestnut and thorn,
With blossoms new-born
   Of dim violet.

Like stars in the grass
   The wind-flowers lie,
And little clouds pass
   Far above in the sky;
Lent lilies beneath
Have broken their sheath
   To laugh and to die.

J. ADDINGTON SYMONDS.



MAY

MAY! queen of blossoms,
  And fulfilling flowers,
With what pretty music
  Shall we charm the hours?
Wilt thou have pipe and reed.
Blown in the open mead?
Or to the lute give heed
  In the green bowers?

Thou hast no need of us,
  Or pipe or wire;
Thou hast the golden bee
  Ripen'd with fire;
And many thousand more
Songsters, that thee adore,
Filling earth's grassy floor
  With new desire.

Thou hast thy mighty herds,
  Tame and free-livers;
Doubt not, thy music too
  In the deep rivers;
And the whole plumy flight
Warbling the day and night—
Up at the gates of light,
  See, the lark quivers!

LORD THURLOW.

AT KEW

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time ;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London !)
And you shall wander hand-in-hand with love in summer's wonderland ;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London !).

The cherry trees are seas of bloom, and soft perfume, and sweet perfume,
The cherry trees are seas of bloom (and oh! so near to London!),
And there they say, when dawn is high, and all the world's a blaze of sky,
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The nightingale is rather rare, and yet they say you'll hear him there,
At Kew, at Kew, in lilac-time (and oh! so near to London!),
The linnet and the throstle too, and after dark the long halloo,
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo,* of owls that ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew, in lilac-time (and oh! so near to London!),

And when the rose begins to pout, and all the chestnut spires are out,
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for London:—

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand-in-hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!).

ALFRED NOYES.

LAUGHING SONG

WHEN the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

When the meadows laugh with lively green,
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene;
When Mary, and Susan, and Emily,
With their sweet, round mouths sing, " Ha, ha, he! "

When the painted birds laugh in the shade;
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread:
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of " Ha, ha, he! "

WILLIAM BLAKE.

SPRING MORNING

THOMALIN

WHERE is every piping lad
That the fields are not yclad
    With their milk-white sheep?
Tell me: is it holiday,
Or if in the month of May
    Use they long to sleep?

PIERS

Thomalin, 'tis not too late,
For the turtle and her mate
    Sitten yet in nest:
And the thrustle hath not been
Gath'ring worms yet on the green,
    But attends her rest.
Not a bird hath taught her young,
Nor her morning's lesson sung
    In the shady grove:
But the nightingale in dark
Singing woke the mounting lark:
    She records her love.
Not the sun hath with his beams
Gilded yet our crystal streams;
    Rising from the sea,
Mists do crown the mountain's tops,
And each pretty myrtle drops:
    'Tis but newly day.

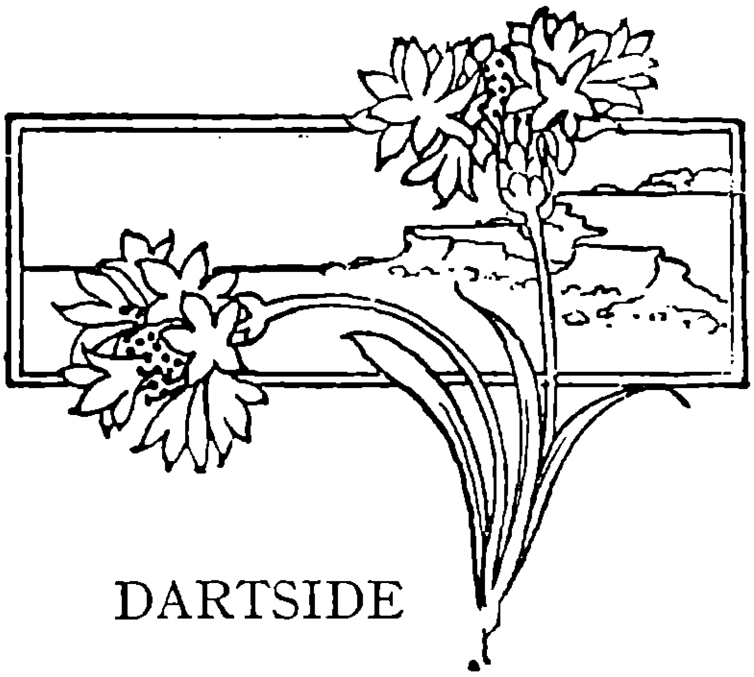
WILLIAM BROWNE.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

UNDER the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.



DARTSIDE

I CANNOT tell what you say, green leaves,
  I cannot tell what you say,
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
  And a word in you this day.

I cannot tell what you say, rosy rocks,
  I cannot tell what you say,
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
  And a word in you this day

I cannot tell what you say, brown streams,
  I cannot tell what you say,
But I know that in you, too, a spirit doth live,
  And a word doth speak this day.

" Oh green is the colour of faith and truth,
And rose the colour of love and youth,
  And brown of the fruitful clay:
Sweet earth is faithful, and fruitful, and young,
And her bridal day shall come ere long,
And you shall know what the rocks and the streams
  And the whispering woodlands say."

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

WHEN I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance:

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With " Here is the fiddler of Dooney! "
And dance like a wave of the sea.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

SONG

THERE was a Knight of Bethlehem,
Whose wealth was tears and sorrows;
His men-at-arms were little lambs,
His trumpeters were sparrows;
His castle was a wooden cross,
Whereon He hung so high;
His helmet was a crown of thorns
Whose crest did touch the sky.

HENRY N. MAUGHAN.

CAROL

WHEN the herds were watching
  In the midnight chill,
Came a spotless lambkin
  From the heavenly hill.

Snow was on the mountains,
  And the wind was cold,
When from God's own garden
  Dropped a rose of gold.

When 'twas bitter winter,
  Houseless and forlorn
In a star-lit stable
  Christ the Babe was born.

Welcome, heavenly lambkin,
  Welcome, golden rose;
Alleluia, Baby
  In the swaddling clothes!

WILLIAM CANTON.

JOSEPH AND MARY

JOSEPH

MARY, art thou the little maid
  Who plucked me flowers in Spring?
I know thee not: I feel afraid:
  Thou'rt strange this evening.

A sweet and rustic girl I won
  What time the woods were green;
No woman with deep eyes that shone,
  And the pale brows of a Queen.

MARY (*inattentive to his words*)

A stranger came with feet of flame
  And told me this strange thing,—
For all I was a village maid
  My son should be a King.

JOSEPH

A King, dear wife. Who ever knew
  Of Kings in stables born!

MARY

Do you hear, in the dark and starlit blue,
  The clarion and the horn?

JOSEPH

Mary, alas, lest grief and joy
  Have sent thy wits astray;
But let me look on this my boy,
  And take the wraps away.

MARY

Behold the lad.

JOSEPH

I dare not gaze:
Light streams from every limb.

MARY

The winter sun has stored his rays,
And passed the fire to him.

Look Eastward, look! I hear a sound.
O, Joseph, what do you see?

JOSEPH

The snow lies quiet on the ground
And glistens on the tree;

The sky is bright with a star's great light,
And clearly I behold
Three Kings descending yonder hill,
Whose crowns are crowns of gold.

O, Mary, what do you hear and see
With your brow toward the West?

MARY

The snow lies glistening on the tree
And silent on Earth's breast;
And strong and tall, with lifted eyes
Seven shepherds walk this way,
And angels breaking from the skies
Dance, and sing hymns, and pray.

JOSEPH

I wonder much at these bright Kings;
The shepherds I despise.

MARY

You know not what a shepherd sings,
Nor see his shining eyes.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER.

I SAW THREE SHIPS

As I sat under a sycamore tree,
—A sycamore tree, a sycamore tree,
I looked me out upon the sea
On Christ's Sunday at morn.

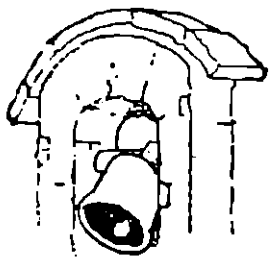
I saw three ships a-sailing there,
—A-sailing there, a-sailing there,
Jesu, Mary, and Joseph they bare
On Christ's Sunday at morn.

Joseph did whistle and Mary did sing,
—Mary did sing, Mary did sing,
And all the bells on earth did ring
For joy our Lord was born.

O they sail'd in to Bethlehem!
—To Bethlehem, to Bethlehem;
Saint Michael was the sterèsman,
Saint John sate in the horn.

And all the bells on earth did ring,
—On earth did ring, on earth did ring;
" Welcome be thou, Heaven's King,
On Christ's Sunday at morn! "

Anonymous.



EX ORE INFANTIUM

LITTLE Jesus, wast Thou shy
Once, and just so small as I?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of Heaven, and just like me?
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,
And ask where all the angels were?
I should think that I would cry
For my house all made of sky;
I would look about the air,
And wonder where my angels were;
And at waking 'twould distress me—
Not an angel there to dress me!

Hadst Thou ever any toys,
Like us little girls and boys?
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all
The angels, that were not too tall,
With stars for marbles? Did the things
Play *Can you see me?* through their wings?

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way?
And did they tire sometimes, being young,
And make the prayer seem very long?
And dost Thou like it best, that we
Should join our hands to pray to Thee?
I used to think, before I knew,
The prayer not said unless we do.
And did Thy Mother at the night
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,
Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said?

Thou canst not have forgotten all
That it feels like to be small:
And Thou know'st I cannot pray
To Thee in my father's way—
When Thou wast so little, say,
Couldst Thou talk Thy Father's way?—
So, a little Child, come down
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;
Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk.
To Thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, Thou art so fair),
And say: "O Father, I, Thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one."

And He will smile, that children's tongue
Has not changed since Thou wast young!

FRANCIS THOMPSON.

SONG

WHEN icicles hang by the wall
  And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
  And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
      Tuwhoo!
Tuwhit! tuwhoo! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
  And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
  And Marian's nose looks red and raw;

When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl—
Then nightly sings the staring owl
Tuwhoo!
Tuwhit! tuwhoo! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

OLD WINTER

OLD WINTER sad, in snow yclad,
Is making a doleful din;
But let him howl till he crack his jowl,
We will not let him in.

Ay, let him lift from the billowy drift
His hoary, haggard form,
And scowling stand, with his wrinkled hand
Outstretching to the storm.

And let his weird and sleety beard
Stream loose upon the blast,
And, rustling, chime to the tinkling rime
From his bald head falling fast.

Let his baleful breath shed blight and death
On herb and flower and tree;
And brooks and ponds in crystal bonds
Bind fast, but what care we?

Let him push at the door,—in the chimney roar,
And rattle the window pane;
Let him in at us spy with his icicle eye,
But he shall not entrance gain.

Let him gnaw, forsooth, with his freezing tooth,
  On our roof-tiles, till he tire;
But we care not a whit, as we jovial sit
  Before our blazing fire.

Come, lads, let's sing, till the rafters ring;
  Come push the can about;—
From our snug fireside this Christmas-tide
  We'll keep Old Winter out.

THOMAS NOEL.

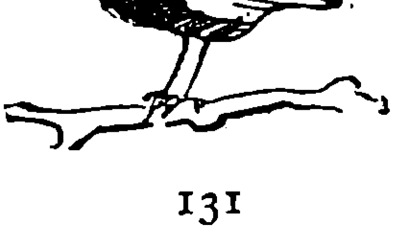
A WINTER SONG

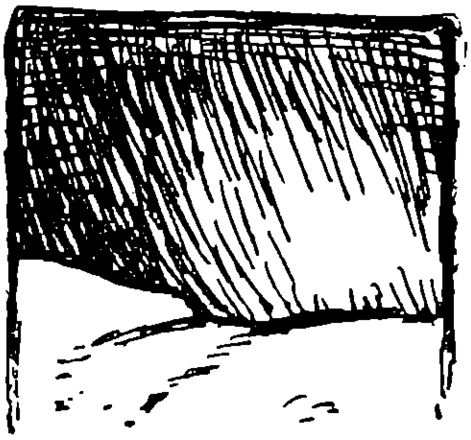
UP in the morning's no for me,
  Up in the morning early;
When a' the hills are cover'd wi' snaw
  I'm sure it's winter fairly.

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west,
  The drift is driving sairly;
Sae loud and shrill's I hear the blast,
  I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn,
  A' day they fare but sparely;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn;
  I'm sure it's winter fairly.

ROBERT BURNS.





SNOW

A PURE white mantle blotted out
  The world I used to know:
There was no scarlet in the sky
  Or on the hills below,
Gently as mercy out of heaven
  Came down the healing snow.

The trees that were so dark and bare
  Stood up in radiant white,
And the road forgot its furrowed care
  As day forgets the night,
And the new heavens and the new earth
  Lay robed in dazzling light.

And every flake that fell from heaven
  Was like an angel's kiss,
Or a feather fluttering from the wings
  Of some dear soul in bliss
Who gently leaned from that bright world
  To soothe the pain of this.

ALFRED NOYES.

THE THREE FISHERS

THREE fishers went sailing out into the West,
Out into the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town:
For men must work and women must weep,
For there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come home to the town:
For men must work and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

CALLER HERRIN'

WHA'LL buy caller herrin'?
They're bonnie fish and halesome farin',
Wha'll buy caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,
Dream'd ye aught o' our puir fellows,
Darkling as they fac'd the billows,
A' to fill the woven willows?
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're no brought here without brave darin';
Buy my caller herrin',
Haul'd through wind and rain.
Wha'll buy caller herrin'?

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
O, ye may ca' them vulgar farin',
Wives and mithers maist despairin',
Ca' them lives o' men.
Wha'll buy caller herrin'?

When the creel o' herrin' passes,
Ladies clad in silks and laces
Gather in their braw pelisses,
Cast their heads and screw their faces.
Wha'll buy caller herrin'?

Neebour wives, now tent my tellin';
When the bonnie fish you're sellin',
At ae word be in yer dealin'—
Truth will stand when a' things failin'.
    Wha'll buy caller herrin'?
    They're bonnie fish and halesome farin',
    Wha'll buy caller herrin',
    New drawn frae the Forth?

LADY NAIRNE.

THE SAILOR'S CONSOLATION

ONE night came on a hurricane,
  The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline slewed his quid,
  And said to Billy Bowline:
  A strong nor'-wester's blowing, Bill,
  Hark! don't ye hear it roar now!
Lord help 'em, how I pities them
  Unhappy folks on shore now.

" Foolhardy chaps as live in towns,
  What danger they are all in,
And now lie quaking in their beds,
  For fear the roof should fall in!
Poor creatures, how they envies us,
  And wishes, I've a notion,
For our good luck in such a storm,
  To be upon the ocean!

  And as for them that's out all day,
  On business from their houses,
And late at night returning home
  To cheer their babes and spouses;

While you and I, Bill, on the deck
  Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots
  About their heads are flying!

" Both you and I have oft-times heard
  How men are killed and undone,
By overturns from carriages,
  By thieves, and fires in London.
We know what risks these landsmen run,
  From noblemen to tailors;
Then, Bill, let us thank Providence
  That you and I are sailors."

CHARLES DIBDIN.

TOM BOWLING

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
  The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
  For death has broach'd him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
  His heart was kind and soft;
Faithful below, he did his duty;
  But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
  His virtues were so rare,
His friends were many and true-hearted,
  His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly,
  Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,
  For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
  When He who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
  The word to pipe " all hands."
Thus Death who kings and tars despatches,
  In vain Tom's life has doff'd:
For though his body's under hatches,
  His soul has gone aloft.

CHARLES DIBDIN.

THE VOYAGE WITH THE NAUTILUS

I MADE myself a little boat,
  As trim as trim could be;
I made it of a great pearl shell
  Found in the Indian Sea.

I made my masts of wild sea-rush
  That grew on a secret shore,
And the scarlet plume of the halcyon
  Was the pleasant flag I bore.

For my sails I took the butterfly's wings;
  For my ropes the spider's line;
And that mariner old, the Nautilus,
  To steer me over the brine.

For he had sailed six thousand years,
  And knew each isle and bay;
And I thought that we, in my little boat,
  Could merrily steer away.

The stores I took were plentiful;
  The dew as it sweetly fell;
And the honey that was hoarded up
  In the wild bee's summer cell.

" Now steer away, thou helmsman good,
  Over the waters free;
To the charmèd Isle of the Seven Kings,
  That lies in the midmost sea."

He spread the sail, he took the helm;
  And, long ere ever I wist,
We had sailed a league, we had reached the isle
  That lay in the golden mist.

The charmèd Isle of the Seven Kings,
  'Tis a place of wondrous spell;
And all that happed unto me there
  In a printed book I'll tell.

Said I, one day, to the Nautilus,
  As we stood on the strand,
" Unmoor my ship, thou helmsman good,
  And steer me back to land;

" For my mother, I know, is sick at heart,
  And longs my face to see.
What ails thee now, thou Nautilus!
  Art slow to sail with me?
Up! do my will; the wind is fresh,
  So set the vessel free."

He turned the helm; away we sailed
  Towards the setting sun:
The flying-fish were swift of wing,
  But we outsped each one.

And on we went for seven days,
Seven days without a night;
We followed the sun still on and on,
In the glow of his setting light.

Down and down went the setting sun,
And down and down went we;
'Twas a splendid sail for seven days
On a smooth descending sea.

On a smooth, descending sea we sailed,
Nor breeze the water curled:
My brain grew sick, for I saw we sailed
On the down-hill of the world.

" Good friend," said I to the Nautilus,
" Can this the right course be?
And shall we come again to land? "
But answer none made he;
And I saw a laugh in his fishy eye,
As he turned it up to me.

So on we went; but soon I heard
A sound as when winds blow,
And waters wild are tumbled down
Into a gulf below.

And on and on flew the little bark,
As a fiend her course did urge;
And I saw in a moment we must hang
Upon the ocean's verge.

I snatched down the sails, I snapped the ropes,
I broke the masts in twain;
But on flew the bark, and 'gainst the rocks
Like a living thing did strain.

" Thou'st steered us wrong, thou helmsman vile! "
Said I to the Nautilus bold;
" We shall down the gulf; we're dead men both!
Dost know the course we hold? "

I seized the helm with a sudden jerk,
And we wheeled round like a bird;
But I saw the gulf of Eternity,
And the tideless waves I heard.

" Good master," said the Nautilus,
" I thought you might desire
To have some wondrous thing to tell
Beside your mother's fire.

" What's sailing on a summer sea?
As well sail on a pool;
Oh, but I know a thousand things
That are wild and beautiful!

And if you wish to see them now,
You've but to say the word."
" Have done! " said I to the Nautilus,
" Or I'll throw thee overboard.

" Have done! " said I, " thou mariner old,
And steer me back to land."
No other word spake the Nautilus,
But took the helm in hand.

I looked up to the lady moon,
She was like a glow-worm's spark;
And never a star shone down to us
Through the sky so high and dark.

We had no mast, we had no ropes,
  And every sail was rent;
And the stores I brought from the charmèd Isle
  In the seven days' sail were spent.

But the Nautilus was a patient thing,
  And steered with all his might
On the up-hill sea; and he never slept,
  But kept the course aright.

And for thrice seven nights we sailed and sailed;
  At length I saw the bay
Where I built my ship, and my mother's house
  'Mid the green hills where it lay.

" Farewell! " said I to the Nautilus,
  And leaped upon the shore;
" Thou art a skilful mariner,
  But I'll sail with thee no more! "

MARY HOWITT.

HOLLY AND IVY

NAY, ivy, nay,
  It shall not be, i-wis;
Let holly have the mastery
  As the manner is.

Holly stands in the hall
  Fair to behold;
Ivy stands without the door,
  She is full sore a-cold.

Holly hath red berries
  As red as any rose;
The foresters and hunters
  Keep them from the does.

Ivy hath berries
  As black as any sloes;
There comes the grey owl
  And eats them as she goes.

Nay, ivy, nay,
  It shall not be, i-wis;
Let holly have the mastery
  As the manner is.

Old Song.

THE APPLE TREE

Here's to thee, old Apple-tree,
Whence thou may'st bud, and whence thou may'st blow,
And whence thou may'st bear apples enow!
Hats full! Caps full!
Bushel, bushel, sacks full;
Old parson's breeches full
And my pockets full too!
Huzza!

Devonshire Folk-song.

THE WAYSIDE INN

I halted at a pleasant inn,
  As I my way was wending;
A golden apple was the sign
  From knotty bough depending.

Mine host—it was an apple tree—
  He smilingly received me,
And spread his choicest, sweetest fruit,
  To strengthen and relieve me.

Full many a little feathered guest
Came through his branches springing;
They hopped and flew from spray to spray,
Their notes of gladness singing.

Beneath his shade I laid me down,
And slumber sweet possessed me;
The soft wind blowing through the leaves
With whispers low caressed me.

And when I rose, and would have paid
My host, so open-hearted,
He only shook his lofty head;
I blessed him and departed.

Anonymous.

THE RIVER'S SONG

CLEAR and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow, and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle, and foaming weir;
Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;
Foul and dank, foul and dank,
By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
Darker and darker the farther I go,
Baser and baser the richer I grow;
Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free,
The floodgates are open, away to the sea,
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along,
To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar.
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again.
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

THE MOON

WHEN over the hill the shadows fly
And the wind of March goes roaring by,
In the morning sky all white and blue,
The moon like a boat goes sailing through;
Driving along, tossed and rolled,
Till she tumbles her cargo out of the hold,
And all the showers and the April flowers
Fall to the earth in silver and gold.

In nights of June, when the merry lark
Has hardly an hour to rest in the dark,
When the toad's abroad, and the chafer hums,
The moon with a yellow lantern comes
To guide all soft little feet that roam,
To light the moth and the beetle home;
And the cricket sees to sing at his ease,
And the rabbit his hair to brush and comb.

In Autumn low in the west is seen
The moon with her sickle glittering keen;
And first, with her bright and narrow horn
She reaps the rows of the rustling corn.
But when they have carried the last grey sheaf,
She comes in the night like a garden-thief,
And cuts down dead the dahlia-bed
And clears the trees of the last red leaf.

In winter dusk, all sullen and red
The moon comes up, like a fire half-dead,
With never a spark of cheer to warm
The birds that mope in the Christmas storm.
But still the lark and the cricket know
Of a day when a joyful wind shall blow
To kindle her fire to the heart's desire,
When the Midsummer Moon thro' the stars shall go

JOHN HALSHAM.

THE MOON

THY beauty haunts me heart and soul,
  O thou fair Moon, so close and bright;
Thy beauty makes me like the child
  That cries aloud to own thy light:
The little child that lifts each arm
To press thee to her bosom warm.

Though there are birds that sing this night
  With thy white beams across their throats,
Let my deep silence speak for me
  More than for them their sweetest notes:
Who worships thee till music fails
Is greater than thy nightingales.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES.

THE MAN IN THE MOON

THE Man in the Moon looked down one night,
When the beams shone bright
With a silvery light.
He chuckled, " Ha! " and laughed, " He, he! "
" What d'ye think I see? "
He said to me.
(I'm friends with the Man in the Moon.)

" I see the babies going to bed
In nightgowns red
And white," he said.
" I love to see the mites upstair
Lisping a rare
Sweet baby-prayer
To the God of the Man in the Moon! "

" They're only babies," I slyly said.
He shook his head,
" Be off to bed
Yourself if you don't love children too.
If it is true,
Away with you,
Don't talk to the Man in the Moon."

" But I do love them," the answer ran,
" As well as the Man
In the old Moon can! "
Then he smiled again and chuckled low:
" I thought just so
By the lovelight glow
In your eyes," said the Man in the Moon.

From *The Golden World.*

PHAËTON, THE SUN-DRIVER

THE wise men say that on the Sun
There are some little spots; oh, many:
But reasons for this, they have none
Worth three a penny.

The Sun is but a splendid car,
By shining horses drawn; you know it:
At least you will do, if you are
At heart a poet.

Axle and wheels are gold and bright,
The spokes are silver, richly burnished;
With diamond and chrysolite
The seat is furnished.

Phaëton, son of Phœbus, tried
To be allowed for once to drive it;
Although they warned him, " If you ride,
You'll ne'er survive it."

But headstrong youth will have its way
Whatever be the woes in payment;
And so the lad put on one day
His grandest raiment,

And mounted in the Sun-car, took
The reins, and off the horses pattered;
When Dawn, in many a skyey nook,
Her roses scattered.

The way was perilous among
The clouds: before he reached the middle
Phaëton pulled a face as long
As any fiddle.

Dawn's roses now all faded grew;
But Noon came out her gifts to render:
And daffodils about her threw
In lavish splendour.

The zenith gained, he saw the World
Below with specks of people busy:
Then from the path the car was hurled,
For he grew dizzy.

Headlong the car went all aflame;
The horses galloped earthwards madly:
'Twas then the negroes black became;
They scorched so badly.

And likewise, then, the beauteous land
Was seen in sundry places turning
From fertile, fruitful forests grand
To deserts burning.

Then up and up the horses fled
Until the timid Moon was frightened;
That's why she still shows overhead
A face so whitened.

The clouds caught fire; for great the heat
When rushed the Sun-car towards the heaven:
Still some are glowing—aren't they sweet
To see at even?

Phaëton fell at last from out
The car, and on through space went sailing:
A comet he (the tail's no doubt
His long hair trailing).

The fiery chariot, here and there,
Was dinged with many a violent bumping
When dashed the frightened horses where
They started jumping.

And these deep dinges Sun-spots are;
Although the wise men do not know it;
If you believe it tell your Pa
That you're a poet.

REED MOORHOUSE.

A CHILD'S DREAM

I DREAMED a dream; methought I stood
Within a very ancient wood;
Strange shadows often came and went,
And stranger mournful murmurs lent
A weirdness to the gloomy view.
I was a little child and knew
Its terror and its trembling too.

And every branch upon the trees
Waved dimly, in a midnight breeze;
Like ghostly arms to clutch and hold,
And to a ghostly breast enfold
For evermore in grim embrace;
Whilst fearsome form and evil face
In every shadow I could trace.

But suddenly thro' hanging leaves,
The curtain which sweet summer weaves,
I caught a glimpse of flashing rays,
Of whirling suns and stars ablaze;
Worlds burning purple, gold, and white,
Born for a moment on my sight,
Brightened and died into the night.

And I, a little child, did know
This was the end of things below;
That Earth would in this chaos fly
To burn with other worlds on high;
To blaze with them all full of light,
A moment, purple, gold, or white,
Then fade to everlasting night.

No longer feared I in the wood,
Nor shook at shadows as I stood;
But, watching sun and moon and star,
Flashing and fading thus afar,
I stood entranced beneath a tree,
And only joy was known to me,
It was so beautiful to see.

LILY ELISE.

THE MORNING STAR

YOUNG and beautiful was Wabun:
He it was who brought the morning,
He it was whose silver arrows
Chased the dark o'er hill and valley;
He it was whose cheeks were painted
With the brightest streaks of crimson,
And whose voice awoke the village,
Called the deer, and called the hunter.
Lonely in the sky was Wabun;
Though the birds sang gaily to him,
Though the wild flowers of the meadow
Filled the air with odours for him;
Though the forests and the rivers
Sang and shouted at his coming,
Still his heart was sad within him,
For he was alone in heaven.
But one morning, gazing earthward,
While the village still was sleeping,

And the fog lay on the river,
Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise,
He beheld a maiden walking
All alone upon a meadow,
Gathering water-flags and rushes
By a river in the meadow.
  Every morning, gazing earthwards,
Still the first thing he beheld there
Was her blue eyes looking at him,
Two blue lakes among the rushes;
And he loved the lonely maiden,
Who thus waited for his coming:
For they both were solitary,
She on earth and he in heaven.
  And he wooed her with caresses,
Wooed her with his smile of sunshine,
With his flattering words he wooed her,
With his sighing and his singing,
Gentlest whispers in the branches,
Softest music, sweetest odours,
Till he drew her to his bosom,
Folded in his robe of crimson,
Till into a star he changed her,
Trembling still upon his bosom;
And for ever in the heavens
They are seen together walking,
Wabun and the Wabun-Annung,
Wabun and the Star of Morning.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

A WISH

MINE be a cot beside the hill;
  A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook, that turns a mill,
  With many a fall, shall linger near.

The swallow oft, beneath my thatch,
  Shall twitter near her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
  And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
  Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing,
  In russet gown and apron blue.

The village church beneath the trees,
  Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
  And point with taper spire to heaven.

SAMUEL ROGERS.

I WILL MAKE YOU BROOCHES

I WILL make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom.

And you shall wash your linen and keep your body
white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside
fire.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

THE SHEPHERD'S HOME

My banks they are furnished with bees,
Whose murmur invites one to sleep;
My grottoes are shaded with trees,
And my hills are white over with sheep.
I seldom have met with a loss,
Such health do my fountains bestow;
My fountains all bordered with moss,
Where the harebells and violets blow.

Not a pine in the grove is there seen,
But with tendrils of woodbine is bound;
Not a beech's more beautiful green,
But a sweet-briar entwines it around.
Not my fields in the prime of the year,
More charms than my cattle unfold;
Not a brook that is limpid and clear,
But it glitters with fishes of gold.

I have found out a gift for my fair,
  I have found where the wood-pigeons breed;
But let me such plunder forbear,
  She will say 'twas a barbarous deed;
For he ne'er could be true, she averred,
  Who would rob a poor bird of its young;
And I loved her the more when I heard
  Such tenderness fall from her tongue.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE.

THE SHEPHERD'S WIFE'S SONG

AH, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king,
    And sweeter too:
For kings have cares that wait upon a crown,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frown:
    Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

His flocks are folded, he comes home at night,
As merry as a king in his delight,
    And merrier too:
For kings bethink them what the state require,
Where shepherds careless carol by the fire.
    Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

He kisseth first, then sits as blithe to eat
His cream and curds, as doth the king his meat;
    And blither too:
For kings have often fears when they do sup,
Where shepherds dread no poison in their cup.

Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Upon his couch of straw he sleeps as sound
As doth the king upon his bed of down,
More sounder too:
For cares cause kings full oft their sleep to spill,
Where weary shepherds lie and snort their fill:
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Thus with his wife he spends the year as blithe
As doth the king at every tide or syth;
And blither too;
For kings have wars and broils to take in hand,
Where shepherds laugh, and love upon the land.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

ROBERT GREENE.

THE HAPPY HEART

ART thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplex'd?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vex'd
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labour bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
O sweet content!
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labour bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

THOMAS DEKKER.

MY LADY NIGHT

NIGHT is a Lady proud,
And when the day is done,
She comes from her house of purple cloud
Beyond the setting sun.

She takes a shining key
And glides along with mirth
To open the gates of ivory
And send the dreams to earth.

And lo! she lights the sky
With stars on either hand,
That the vision-hosts may safely fly
Unto our sleeping land

The beam of silver star,
The ray of moon on high,
Are only the lamps that gleam afar
To show where dreamers lie.

Thanks! thanks! my Lady Night,
For the sweet lamps I see,
And the phantom-folk who wing their flight
From gates of ivory.

Sometime, if I'm allowed,
I'll dwell when day is done,
With thee in a house of purple cloud
Beyond the setting sun.

HAROLD HALMYR.

NOD

SOFTLY along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew,
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
" Rest, rest, and rest again."

WALTER DE LA MARE.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD

THEY say that God lives very high;
  But if you look above the pines
You cannot see our God; and why?

And if you dig down in the mines
  You never see Him in the gold,
Though from Him all that's glory shines.

God is so good, He wears a fold
  Of heaven and earth across His face—
Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace
  Slides down by thrills through all things made,
Through sight and sound of every place:

As if my tender mother laid
  On my shut lips her kisses' pressure,
Half waking me at night, and said,
  "Who kissed you through the dark, dear guesser?"

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THE LITTLE EVERIN'

THE sun is goin' wes' with me,
  The little everin's nigh,
An' clearer shines the light upon
  Those mansions in the sky;
An' surely through that level light
The very flowers shine more bright,
An' all things soften to the sight,
    In the little everin'.

The years have slipped away from me
  Like snow before the rain;
I would not ask to have them back
  Or live them through again;
But thankful at the close of day
To linger on the homeward way
An' watch the childher at their play
    In the little everin'.

There's some that's gone away from me
  In lands afar to roam;
An' some that's gone to wait for me
  In that new Heavenly Home.
I see them in the sunset gleam,
They speak with me across the stream,
An' all my life becomes a dream
    In the little everin'

JOSEPHINE KERMODE.

BRIGHT IS THE RING OF WORDS

Bright is the ring of words
When the right man rings them;
Fair the fall of song
When the singer sings them.
Still they are carolled and said,
On wings they are carried,
After the singer is dead,
And the maker buried.

Low as the singer lies
In the field of heather,
Songs of his fashion bring
The swains together.
And when the west is red
With the sunset embers,
The lover lingers and sings,
And the maid remembers.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM. 1824–89. Born Ballyshannon, Ireland, but of English family. Son of bank-manager. Appointed Supervisor of Customs and was transferred to London. Contributed to Leigh Hunt's Journal and introduced by him to Carlyle and men of letters. Works: *Irish Songs and Poems; Songs, Poems and Ballads.* Wrote delightful prose descriptions, records of many walks. Verse fresh and graceful.

ARNOLD, MATTHEW. 1822–88. Son of famous schoolmaster, Dr. Arnold of Rugby. Educated Rugby and Balliol, Oxford. He was a famous Inspector of Schools and did much towards founding a broad-minded system of education in England. Always he had welfare of fellow-creatures at heart. In his poetry we can read the intense admiration he had for his father, and though in his finest poems there is an undertone of fatalism and depression, yet his work rings with honesty and sincerity. His best known poems are: *The Scholar Gipsy*; *Balder Dead*; *Sohrab and Rustum*; *Rugby Chapel,* and our poem *The Forsaken Merman.*

BARNES, WILLIAM. 1801–86. Born Dorset. Schoolmaster, then rector. Foremost English dialect poet, he wrote some of our best pastoral poetry. His style is simple and sincere, and he shows rare insight into the joys and sorrows of the simple country folk. Like Burns, he was a natural lyrist. His *Hwomely Rhymes* and *Poems of Rural Life in Dorset Dialect* are well known.

BATESON, THOMAS. Died 1630. Probably native of Cheshire. Organist Chester Cathedral. Left for Dublin; took degree of Bachelor of Music there. His fame rests entirely on his madrigals: *The First Set of English Madrigals,* twenty-eight songs for several voices, 1604; *The Second Set of English Madrigals,* thirty songs. Holds high place amongst Elizabethan composers. Some of original manuscript is in British Museum.

BLAKE, WILLIAM. 1757–1827. Born London; son of tradesman. Poet, engraver, bookbinder and bookseller. A curious character in English literature; his work has had great influence. He lived half in another world, a dream-world, and spent his life engraving

wildly mystical pictures, and either writing poetry for mothers and babies, or books so wildly imaginative as to be unreadable. In his best poetry, which is both quaint and simple, we can read his love of Nature, of children, and of dumb wild things. He believed firmly in the spirit-world. Works: *Songs of Innocence; Songs of Experience; The Book of Urizen.*

BOKER, GEORGE H. 1823–90. Born Philadelphia. Poet, playwright and diplomatist. Minister to Constantinople. Works: *The Lesson of Life; Plays and Poems.* Do you remember other "Dirges" besides this simple but effective one, *For an American Soldier*? Some of our loveliest poems are of this type.

BRIDGES, ROBERT SEYMOUR. Born 1844. Studied medicine after Oxford. He is the present Poet Laureate and has written poems and plays. His lyrics are among the best in our language, the work of a scholar. Notice the perfect beauty of his words, which are so musical and serenely quiet. He seems to have regained the loveliness and lightness of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. His best work is in *The Growth of Love* (sonnet group) and *Shorter Poems.*

BROWNE, WILLIAM. 1591–1643. Born Tavistock. Pastoral and descriptive poet. Influenced largely by Spenser. Great lover of Devonshire landscapes. All his poems produced before he was thirty. Works: *Britannia's Pastorals* (fine descriptive poetry); *The Shepheard's Pipe; The Inner Temple Masque.*

BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT. 1806–61. Born Durham. Educated at home, but owed her profound knowledge of Greek to a blind man, Hugh Stuart Boyd. When fifteen, met with spinal injury. She later developed lung affection, but in spite of all, her verse is always brave and strong. Married Robert Browning and lived in Italy. When quite young she translated *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, and after marriage wrote *Casa Guidi Windows; Aurora Leigh;* and *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (which are original poems, not translations). She had great love for whatsoever things are good and true and beautiful; and as great a hatred for those base, mean and unworthy.

BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN. 1794–1878. Born Massachusetts, U.S.A. Son of doctor. Studied law, but left it for journalism. Editor of *New York Review.* His lyrics show passionate love of liberty, and in his writings are wonderful descriptions of American scenery. His poem *Thanatopsis* ranks high in American literature.

BURNS, ROBERT. 1759–96. Born Ayrshire. Son of farmer; worked on farm. First volume of poems proved great success. Appointed to post as Exciseman. A poet of the people, and a natural lyrist who is responsible for some of the finest songs in our literature. Works: *Poems, chiefly in the Scottish dialect; The*

Prayer of Holy Willie. His *Cotter's Saturday Night* and *Tam o' Shanter* are well known, but his fame rests on such lovely lyrics as *My Luve is like a Red, Red Rose* and *Ye Banks and Braes.*

CAMPBELL, THOMAS. 1777–1844. Born Glasgow, of Highland family. Educated Glasgow University; distinguished for translations from the Greek. First great work, *The Pleasures of Hope,* published when twenty-one. His well-known minor poems, *Hohenlinden, Ye Mariners of England, Battle of the Baltic,* written whilst on a visit to Hamburg. Wrote also *Gertrude of Wyoming* in Spenserian stanzas. Buried in Westminster Abbey.

CANTON, WILLIAM. Born 1845, Isle of Chusan. Childhood spent in Jamaica. Educated France. Has published many books, the best known being *The Invisible Playmate* from which our poem is taken. Others are *W V., her Book; In Memory of W V.;* also volumes of verse, *Poems Old and New; A Lost Epic;* and books for children. The birth of Jesus has been a source of inspiration for many authors and painters throughout the ages. Can you mention any such poems, plays and pictures?

CARROLL, LEWIS (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson). 1832–98. Born Daresbury, near Warrington. Educated Rugby and Oxford. Mathematical lecturer, Christ Church. His most famous books, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass,* are nursery classics and have been translated into many languages. Also wrote *The Hunting of the Snark; Sylvie and Bruno;* and *Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry; Lawn Tennis Tournaments; Symbolic Logic.* Truly a strange mixture.

CHALMERS, PATRICK. Banker and landed proprietor, Forfarshire. Educated Rugby. Has published several volumes of poems: *Green Days and Blue Days; A Peck of Maut; Pipes and Tabors; Pancakes.* Most of his poems are reprinted from *Punch.*

CHESTERTON, GILBERT KEITH. F.R.L.S. Born 1874, Kensington. Journalist, essayist and author of fantastic novels. Works: *The Flying Inn; Ballad of the White Horse; A Short History of England; Man who knew too much.* Has written also about Watts, George Bernard Shaw, Browning, Dickens.

COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR. 1772–1834. Born Devonshire. Son of vicar. Educated Jesus College, Cambridge. Friend of Southey and Wordsworth. Published with the latter the important *Lyrical Ballads* to which he contributed *The Ancient Mariner.* This book of ballads is an important one in English literature, for it marks a great change in the style and contents of our poetry, when French and German influences were to give place to our own native, and therefore natural, ones. The beauty of simplicity and tender thought, the truthful description of Nature and love of her, the ideas that are strong and clean,

took the place of the artificial verse which had so long been fashionable.

Collins, William. 1721–59. Born Chichester. Son of hatter. Educated Oxford; distinguished there for "genius and indolence"; fellow-student of Gilbert White, the naturalist. Died in obscurity. Finest work in his odes: *How Sleep the Brave; Ode to Evening; On the Death of Thomson* (his friend); *Ode to the Passions.* Great use of metaphor and personification. The only great lyrical writer of the stilted and artificial eighteenth century.

Colum, Padraic. Born 1881. Writer of lyric verse, simple of theme, and characteristically Irish. Has also written plays for the Irish National Theatre, *The Land; Thomas Muskerry;* and has edited Irish popular songs, *Broad Sheet Ballads* and *Poems of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood.* His book of verse is called *Wild Earth,* and from this our perfect little *Cradle Song* is taken.

Darley, George. 1795–1846. Born Dublin. Educated Trinity College. Mathematician, critic. On staff of *Athenæum.* Victim of melancholia. Has written simple, but most charming lyrics; also stories (*Lilian of the Vale*) and plays (*Ethelstan; Thomas à Becket*).

Davies, William H. Born 1870, Monmouthshire. Passed six years of his life as a tramp in America. Worked passage many times to England, where he earned a "living" as hawker and street singer. Recognised as poet when thirty-four. His verse springs from experience; it is spontaneous, simple and full of grace. Some of his work reaches a very high level. Sees the beauty of common things, but in his narrative poems, even when humorous, there is a tinge of bitterness, reflecting his own and others' hardships. Works: *The Soul's Destroyer; Nature Poems; Farewell to Poesy; Songs of Joy.*

De la Mare, Walter. Born 1873, Charlton, Kent. Educated St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School. Huguenot descent. Personal friend of Rupert Brooke. Poems full of delicate charm; fantastic, giving sense of the supernatural; always sweet and pensive. Like most modern poets his verse shows great love for animals. Works: *Songs of Childhood; The Listeners; A Child's Day; Peacock Pie;* miscellaneous prose works, plays and prize novel, *The Return;* and a delightful anthology, *Come Hither.*

Dekker, Thomas. 1570?–1637? Born London. He was a prolific dramatist but only a few of his plays were printed, such as *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and *The Virgin Martyr.* More of interest to us now are his pamphlets, *The Wonderful Year* (an account of the Great Plague) and *The Bellman of London,* which tells of London vagabonds, of whom he knew at first-hand, as he spent many years in prison himself for debt. And yet he

could sing of *The Happy Heart.* "Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vex'd to add to golden numbers, golden numbers?"

DIBDIN, CHARLES. 1745–1814. Born Southampton. Attracted notice by his singing. As a young boy composed operetta, *The Shepherd's Artifice,* which was produced at Covent Garden. Lived unsettled life as actor and composer of stage music. His quarrelsome disposition lost him the friendship of Sheridan and Garrick. He wrote nearly seventy dramatic pieces, but his fame to-day lies in his sea-songs. Of these he composed almost a hundred; among the best are *Tom Bowling* and *Poor Jack.* In *The Sailor's Consolation* we landsmen can see ourselves as others see us.

DOBELL, SYDNEY. 1824–74. Born Cranford, Kent. Son of wine-merchant. A serious illness when quite a young man, and from which he never quite recovered, made him a traveller in quest of health. Many countries he visited, but in *The Chanted Calendar* it is easy to see one he knew and loved well. His principal works are *The Romans* and *England in Time of War.*

DOBSON, HENRY AUSTIN. 1840–1921. Born Plymouth. Finished education Strasburg. Principal, Board of Trade. Published volumes of poems, but most important work was biography; accurate, sympathetic, excellent critic. *Lives of Hogarth, Goldsmith,* etc.

DRAYTON, MICHAEL. 1563–1631. Born Warwickshire. His first work was *The Harmonie of the Church,* a metrical translation of parts of the Scriptures, and this was followed by *Poems Lyric and Heroic,* in which appeared his famous *Ballad of Agincourt.* His *Polyolbion* is interesting from a historical point of view, being full of details of events and persons, local events and old-time customs.

FIELD, EUGENE. 1850–95. Born St. Louis, Missouri. Journalist at twenty-three. In *The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac* he appears as a humorous writer, but he is rightly best known as a poet for children, and those who love them. His best verses for these appear in *With Trumpet and Drum.* His work is melodious.

FLECKER, JAMES ELROY. 1884–1915. Born London. Educated Trinity College, Oxford. Studied Oriental languages and went to Constantinople. Developed consumption and died Switzerland, at age of thirty. He was largely influenced by Keats, and his verse is bright and imaginative, with skilful Nature-painting. Think of Henley, Stevenson, Calverley, Mrs. Browning and others who were invalids, yet whose work is cheerful and brave.

FORD, THOMAS. 1580?–1648. Composer; one of the musicians to the Prince of Wales, son of James I. *Musicke of Sundry Kindes*

—*set forth in two Bookes*. In the first book were eleven songs which included the celebrated *There is a Lady sweet and kind* and *Since first I saw your face*. The second contained eighteen pieces of Music, Pavens, Galiards, Almaines, etc. Ford also composed many anthems and sacred canons. As remuneration he received the princely salary of £30 per annum. He was buried St. Margaret's, Westminster.

FRANKLIN, MICHAEL. Born 1903, London. Son of banker. Educated Queen's College, Oxford. President of the Oxford Jewish Congregation. Our poem, *The Scarecrow*, was written when the author was only thirteen years of age.

GALES, RICHARD LAWSON. Born 1862. Educated privately and Oxford, where he won the Newdigate Prize. Ordained 1888. In 1909 he was appointed by Mr. Asquith to be vicar of Gedney. Works: *Studies in Arcady; The Vanished Country Folk; Old-World Essays;* and volumes of verse: *A Posy of Folk-songs; David in Heaven; Ballads and Carols; Skylark and Swallow.*

GIBSON, WILFRID WILSON. Born 1878, Hexham, Northumberland. Works: *Urlyn the Harper; On the Threshold; Stonefolds; Web of Life; Daily Bread; Battle.* Like many of our modern poets his early work was lyrical, while the later work is inclined to grim realism. He lived with miners, slum-dwellers, gipsies, outcasts, and became the poet of the poor, and the voice of contemporary industrial life. Pessimism sounds in his poems, and many are darkened by the shadow of war.

GOLDSMITH, OLIVER. 1728–74. Born County Longford, Ireland, but of English parentage. Son of clergyman, the original of the poor parson in the *Deserted Village*. Educated Trinity College, Dublin; failed to take Holy Orders. Studied medicine, Edinburgh. Travelled Continent two years, supporting himself by flute-playing. He was then a literary hack in London. Works: *The Traveller; Deserted Village* (poems); *Vicar of Wakefield* (novel); and *The Good-natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer* (plays). Befriended by Dr. Johnson.

GREENE, ROBERT. 1560?–92. Born Norwich. Travelled abroad. Deserted wife. Playwright and pamphleteer. Lived in wildest dissipation, and yet his lyrics, which were the best of his work, are full of sylvan sweetness, and purity of thought and language. It seems almost as if he were two men in one. Works: *The Myrrour of Modestie; Farewell to Folly; The Repentance of Robert Greene.*

HARDY, THOMAS. Born 1840, Dorchester. Trained architect, but the success of his first novel decided career. Famous both

as novelist and poet. His chief work is an epic-drama, *The Dynasts*. Other verse: *Wessex Poems; Poems of Past and Present.* Novels: *Far from the Madding Crowd; Tess; Jude the Obscure.* These were received with hostile criticism, but the author is now regarded as one of our greatest moderns.

HERRICK, ROBERT. 1591–1674. Son of London silversmith. Clergyman, but was ejected from his living. Friend of "Rare Ben Jonson." Works: *Hesperides; Noble Numbers.* He was a natural singer, like Campion and Burns, and may be regarded as the forerunner of all that is finest in our lyrical poetry. He has been called "The Saint of Flowers"; many of his poems show his love for them. *To Blossoms* is an exquisite example.

HEYWOOD, THOMAS. 1576?–1649? Born Lincolnshire. Actor and dramatic writer. Plays: *A Woman killed with Kindness; Fair Maid of the West.* Also wrote many lyrics of rare quality. His work contains many simple and beautiful pictures of English home-life. Notice the exquisitely simple wording of this *Matin Song* (or "aubade," as this type of lyric is sometimes called); the poem is as sweet and pure as the quiet countryside at morn.

HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL. 1809–94. Born Cambridge, Mass. Son of minister. Studied law and medicine and became Professor of Anatomy, Harvard. Won reputation with *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table;* and *Professor* and *Poet* of that series followed. Novel: *Elsie Venner.*

HOOD, THOMAS. 1799–1839. Born London. Son of publisher whose death left family in poor circumstances. Sub-editor when twenty-two; stepping-stone for genius. Friend of Charles Lamb, Hazlitt and De Quincey. A professional humorist and punster of his day, he is best remembered for his serious poems: *Song of the Shirt; Bridge of Sighs; Eugene Aram* and *Ode to Melancholy.* Died of consumption.

HOWITT, MARY. 1799–1888. Born Coleford, Gloucester. Wife of William Howitt. Many books were written in collaboration with her husband, but those she wrote alone were mainly for children. They were Quakers, but became ardent Spiritualists, and eventually Mrs. Howitt joined the Church of Rome. In addition to producing over a hundred books, we owe thanks to her for an admirable translation of the tales of Hans Andersen.

HUNT, LEIGH. 1784–1859. Born Southgate, Middlesex. Descended from one of the oldest settlers in Barbadoes. Went to Christ's Hospital School, and the description of his school-days occupies large part of his *Autobiography*. A shy, delicate boy, with horror of flogging then in vogue at schools. Friend of Charles Lamb, Byron and Moore. Imprisoned for attack on Prince Regent in the *Examiner*, of which he was editor. His

narrative poems, such as *The Story of Rimini*, are excellent. Perhaps his best-known poem is that charming little story, *Abou Ben Adhem*.

INGELOW, JEAN. 1820–97. Daughter of a banker at Boston, Lincs. Her earlier years were spent in the fen country until she finally settled in London. There is a graceful simplicity and tenderness in her poetry which has endeared her to the hearts of many people. In addition to volumes of verse she wrote many stories for and about children: *Mopsa the Fairy* and *Stories told to Children*. It is not certain that *The Dove's Answer* is her poem. It does not appear in the English edition of her works, but was certainly published over her name in an American magazine, and the spirit and style are hers.

KEATS, JOHN. 1795–1821. Born London. Apprenticed to surgeon, but abandoned medical career. When twenty-two published *Endymion*, and two years later *Lamia; Isabella; Eve of St. Agnes*. Consumptive; died Rome when only twenty-six. His poetry has been of great influence; the beauty of his language is much, but the feeling it awakes in us of the value of an ideal Beauty is much more. Shelley's *Adonais* is a noble lament for Keats.

KERMODE, JOSEPHINE. A Manx poet. She has published *Manx Melodies* and *Ellan Vannin*. Most of her work is written in dialect-verse, and shows the influence of folk- and fairy-lore of her island. Her lyrics are sympathetic and tender, and full of delicate beauty. Her pen-name is "Cushag" (Ragwort).

KINGSLEY, CHARLES. 1819–75. Born Holne Vicarage, near Dartmoor. Educated King's College, London; then Magdalen, Cambridge. Rector of Eversley, Hampshire. Professor of History, Cambridge; then Canon of Chester. After a voyage to tropics became Canon of Westminster and chaplain to the Queen. His works, chiefly fiction, are remarkable for their diversity. *Alton Locke* (social reform); *Hypatia* (early Christianity); *Westward Ho!* (tale of Spanish Main); *Hereward the Wake* (days of William I.); *The Heroes* (Greek myths); *Water Babies* (fairy-tale). Many of his lyrics are universally known.

KINGSLEY, HENRY. 1830–76. Born Barnack, Northamptonshire. Younger brother of Charles Kingsley. Educated Oxford. With fellow-students went to Australian gold-fields but was unsuccessful. *Geoffrey Hamlyn* relates his experiences. War correspondent during Franco-German war. Wrote many novels: *Ravenshoe; Silcote of Silcotes; Austin Elliot*. In our poem, *The Blackbird's Song*, we can see the same tenderness of thought and expression that marked the work of his more famous brother.

LEDWIDGE, FRANCIS. 1892–1917. A young Irish soldier-poet who fell in the Great War. How many young writers of promise were lost thus to us and to the world! He was discovered and encouraged by Lord Dunsany, who has edited the *Complete Poems* of Ledwidge. We owe much that is fine in our literature to such encouragement and kindly help of noble-hearted men and women.

LETTS, WINIFRED M. Educated Alexandra College, Dublin. Author of several books for children, novels, and two plays which were produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. Volumes of verse: *Songs from Leinster; Hallow E'en.* Since 1916 she has been a masseuse in military and pensions hospitals.

LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH. 1807–82. Born Maine, U.S.A. At Bowdoin College with Nathaniel Hawthorne; and there Professor of Modern Languages. Afterwards at Harvard. Talent for translation can be noted in poems. He is the best known of all American poets. Longer poems are *Evangeline, Hiawatha, Spanish Student*, and many of his shorter ones are widely known.

MASEFIELD, JOHN. Born 1874, Ledbury. Ran away from home and shipped as cabin-boy. Tramped on foot through various countries. Spent many years before the mast. Has done a larger and more varied output than any other modern poet. His work may be classified as prose-novels (*Multitude and Solitude; Captain Margaret*); verse-novels (*The Everlasting Mercy; Dauber*); plays (*Nan; Pompey the Great*); and exquisite lyrics like *Beauty; Twilight.* His work shows that he knows both the sea and mankind.

MAUGHAM, HENRY NEVILLE. Our poem is taken from his play, *The Husband of Poverty; a Drama of Francis of Assisi*, published 1896. Published several other plays, *Sir Paul Pindar; The Landslip; The Old and the New;* and a romance, *Richard Hawkewood.*

MCLEOD, IRENE (MRS. A. DE SELINCOURT). Studied first at Academy of Dramatic Art, but left stage for literature. Helped by John Masefield. First book, published in 1914, met with great success; was followed by two other books of verse and novels. The poem, *Lone Dog*, has been published in many anthologies, and has been set to music.

MOORE, SHEILA. Born 1878. Has published a book of original verse for children, dealing largely with folk-tales. Anthologist. Is keenly interested in dramatic work for children, and has produced a number of plays and sketches for them. Works: *Moonshine; The Axe.* Contributor to educational journals.

MOORE, THOMAS. 1779–1852. Born Dublin. Son of grocer. Entered Trinity College, Dublin, to study for bar, but abandoned

this for literature. In London he became very popular because of his playing and singing. He had remarkable musical gifts, and he is best remembered for his *Irish Melodies*, which have set him foremost as Erin's national lyrist. His longer poem, *Lalla Rookh*, is also well known.

MOTHERWELL, WILLIAM. 1797–1835. Born Glasgow. Studied one session Glasgow University. Editor *Glasgow Courier*. Works: *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern*, a collection of Scottish ballads; *Poems, Narrative and Lyrical*. Versified successfully Scandinavian folk-songs.

NAIRNE, LADY CAROLINE. 1766–1845. Born at the "auld house of Gask," Perthshire. Daughter of a Jacobite. Her eighty-seven songs appeared in *The Scottish Minstrel* under the pseudonym of "Mrs. Bogan of Bogan." Her Jacobite songs will always live in the hearts of the Scotch people. The best-known poems are our *Caller Herrin'; The Hundred Pipers; Charlie is my Darling; Land o' the Leal;* four charming little lyrics.

NASH, THOMAS. 1567–1601. Born Lowestoft, Suffolk. Travelled France and Italy. Careless, jovial, and like many other poets, generally in want, and died in distress and debt. *Pierce Pennilesse* paints his own poverty, and his *Unfortunate Traveller* is perhaps the first English novel. Our poem, *Spring*, is very beautiful. Can you say the last line of the verses so that it sounds like the voices of birds? Can you find a poem in the Bible about Spring?

NOEL, THOMAS. 1779–1861. Born Kirkby-Mallory. Son of minister. Educated Merton College, Oxford. Works: *The Cottage Muse*, stanzas upon proverbs and scripture-texts; *Rymes and Roundelays*. He is the author of that well-known song, *Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep*.

NOYES, ALFRED. Born 1880. Staffordshire poet. Educated Oxford. His poems are often sea-music in verse, and he is deeply read in Elizabethan writings. Works: *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern; Drake; Forty Singing Seamen*, and long fairy-tale poems, *Flower of Old Japan; Forest of Wild Thyme*. Great command of language and rhythm.

O'NEILL, MOIRA. An Irish author who wrote *Songs of the Glens of Antrim* in the dialect used by the country people. Her verse is truly Celtic in spirit in its varying moods of melancholy and gaiety. Can you mention any other dialect-poets? Who was the greatest of the English writers who used dialect? He wrote *Hwomely Rhymes*.

OLDYS, WILLIAM. 1696–1761. Literary antiquary and Norroy King-at-Arms. Collected valuable library. Librarian to Harley,

Earl of Oxford. Wrote *Life of Raleigh* for edition of Raleigh's *History of the World,* which he published. Compiler of bibliographical work, *The British Librarian.* Our poem published anonymously as "made extempore by a gentleman, occasioned by a fly etc."

QUILLER-COUCH, SIR ARTHUR THOMAS. Born 1863, Cornwall. Educated Trinity College, Oxford, where he became lecturer in classics. Knighted 1910. Professor of English Literature, Cambridge. His earlier writings were stories under the pseudonym of "Q," but he has also published lectures and essays such as *On the Art of Reading; On the Art of Writing;* and many beautiful poems. But perhaps the best of his work lies in the wonderful anthologies which he has edited: *The Oxford Books of English Verse; Victorian Verse; Ballads;* for with these he has helped others to have a knowledge of the finest poetry which is England's proud possession.

ROGERS, SAMUEL. 1763–1855. Born Stoke Newington. Son of banker and had great wealth. A careful and fastidious writer himself, showing good taste and tenderness, he is also worthy of note as the generous patron of the poorer artists and authors of his time. He refused Laureateship. Works: *Pleasures of Memory; Human Life; Italy* (descriptive poem in blank verse); *Ode to Superstition.*

ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA GEORGINA. 1830–94. Family half-Italian. Sister of Dante Gabriel, poet and painter. She wrote poems when quite a young girl which were published in *The Germ,* a magazine of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood which her brother helped to found, along with Holman Hunt, Woolner and Millais. She was intensely religious and wrote many sacred poems. Her lyrics and sonnets are her best work, rather melancholy but most musical, and beautiful to speak. Works: *Goblin Market; Prince's Progress* (both fairy stories); *Sing Song* (for the very little ones).

SACKVILLE, THOMAS. Lord Buckhurst. 1536–1608. First great name in poetry in reign of Elizabeth. Lord High-Treasurer of England. He wrote the *Prologue to the Myrroure for Magistrates.* Poet was to descend to the underworld and converse with famous Englishmen who had suffered ill-fortune. The author only wrote one story, that of the Duke of Buckingham who supported Richard the Third, and the book was completed by George Ferrers. Our poem is a fine personification of war. Spenser was without doubt influenced by this poet.

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. 1564–1616. Born Stratford-on-Avon in "the spacious times of great Elizabeth." Educated local

Grammar School. Actor in London; playwright; part owner Globe Theatre. Earliest fame gained as poet (*Venus and Adonis*), but greatness established by plays and sonnets. A profound thinker with a marvellous knowledge of mankind. Can you mention the poets of any other nations who can be said to be worthy of the name of "world-poets" as Shakespeare is? "Not of an age; but for all time."

SHARP, WILLIAM. 1856–1905. Born Paisley, but settled in London. Writer of verse, novels, books on Rossetti, Shelley, Heine. Chiefly remembered as author of remarkable series Celtic tales, legends and romances, of which *The Immortal Hour* is best known, a drama based on Celtic myth. These appeared as the work of "Fiona Macleod," his pseudonym.

SHENSTONE, WILLIAM. 1714–63. Born Worcestershire. Taught to read at a dame-school; his old teacher he pictures in his *Schoolmistress*, a burlesque imitation of Edmund Spenser. Other works: *Pastoral Ballad; Progress of Taste; Poems.* He was a famous landscape-gardener and spent much time and money in beautifying his estate at Leasowes. *The Shepherd's Home* probably describes his own beautiful retreat.

SOUTHEY, ROBERT. 1774–1843. Born Bristol. Son of linen-draper. Expelled from Westminster School for writing article in school magazine against flogging. After leaving Oxford he travelled in Spain and Ireland, and settled at Greta Hall, Keswick. Friend of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and like them, greatly influenced by the French Revolution. Poet Laureate. Works: *Life of Nelson; History of the Peninsular War; Lives of Uneducated Poets; The Doctor* (in which appeared that wonderful story for children of all ages, *The Story of the Three Bears*).

STEPHENS, JAMES. Born 1882. One of the modern group of Irish writers which includes W. B. Yeats, Padraic Colum, Seumas O'Sullivan, Cousins, Eva Gore-Booth and others. Prose works: *Irish Fairy Tales; The Crock of Gold.* Verse: *The Hill of Vision; Songs from the Clay; Green Branches.* Note how the love of animals is often the note of modern poetry; this, and an ever-increasing love for humanity, especially for those who most need it, are two great forces moulding present-day verse.

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS. 1850–94. Born Edinburgh. Son of engineer, builder of bridges and lighthouses. Studied for law, but ill-health intervened. Travelled Continent and America and eventually settled in Samoa. Died there. Works: *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes; Virginibus Puerisque* (essays); *Treasure Island; Kidnapped; Child's Garden of Verses; Underwoods; Songs of Travel.* Writings have great charm; he was a genius as "Teller of Tales." (Natives of Samoa called him "Tusitala," the "Tale-Teller.")

SYMONDS, JOHN ADDINGTON. 1840–93. Son of a Bristol physician. Educated Harrow and Balliol. Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. His poor health forced him to abandon the study of law. Works: *Studies of the Greek Poets; Shakespeare's Predecessors in the English Drama.* Translated *Sonnets of Michelangelo and Campanella,* and wrote books on Shelley, Sidney and Walt Whitman. What a perfect little lyric is *April*! A wonderful picture is painted for us in two tiny stanzas!

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35.	Ruskin's Unto This Last	1	4
104.	Modern Essays	1	4
106.	Bacon's Essays	1	4
109.	Some English Diarists	1	4
120.	Poems and Essays of Oliver Goldsmith	1	4
193.	John Milton. Essays on Milton and Certain Poems	1	4
226.	Abbot Samson, etc. Carlyle	1	4

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